

CHEETAL

A Journal of
Wild Life Preservation Society of India



Wild Life Preservation Society of India.

I. The aims and objects of the Society are as follows:

- (a) To promote interest in the preservation and conservation of all forms of animal life among the youth of the country.
- (b) To assist in enforcing the game and arms rules and to bring to the notice of the authorities any infringements of the same
- (c) To advise and help Government and the District authorities in the formation, maintenance and protection of Sanctuaries and National Parks.
- (d) To raise funds for the carrying out of the above aims and objects.
- (e) To carry on any other activities which will serve the above objectives, including publicity and propaganda and the issue of a journal.
- (f) To assist members of the Society in obtaining shooting and fishing facilities and facilities for viewing and photographing wild life etc.

II. The Society has, upto date:—

Patrons	...	18	Educational members	...	20
Life members	...	53	Professional members	...	43
Ordinary members	...	153	Honorary members	...	10
Institutional members	...	7	Student members	...	145
Affiliated members	...	5	Family Members	...	2

Total Membership is 456.

The Society's funds stand, so far, at Rs. 8,500/-

III. Office Bearers and Members of the Executive Committee.

President :—The Maharaja of Nabha.

Executive Vice President :—Shri P. D. Stracey, I.F.S.

Vice Presidents :—Shri R. L. Holdsworth.

Dr. Baini Prashad.

S. Ranbir Singh.

His Highness the Maharaja of Kotah.

Hony. Secretary :—Shri Gurkirat Singh Mann.

Asstt. Hony. Secretary :—Shri Ram Prakash,

- Members* :—
1. Dr. John C. Taylor (Str.), Bhogpur, Dehra Dun.
 2. Shri B. Mitchell, Arcadia Tea Estate, Dehra Dun.
 3. Shri Tej Bahadur Singh, 11, New Cantt. Road, Dehra Dun.
 4. Shri Narendra Singh, Col. Brown Cambridge School, Dehra Dun
 5. Maj. E. G. Mainwaring, Cambrian Hall, Dehra Dun.
 6. Lt Col. C. W. Adams, Clement Town, Dehra Dun.
 7. Col. A. N. W. Powell, The Mall, Mussoorie.
 8. Brig. Gambhir Singh, Dehra Dun.
 9. Dr. R. S. Gupta, Dehra Dun
 10. Dr. S. L. Goyal, Dehra Dun.
 11. Shri S. K. Sangal, Dehra Dun.
 12. Secy. Wild Life Club, F.R.I. & Colleges, Dehra Dun.
 13. Secy. Shikar Club, Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun
 14. Shri H. K. Dang, The Doon School, Dehra Dun.
 15. Capt Reginald Sawhney, New Delhi.
 16. Dr. Malcolm Blakeney, Jamshedpur.
 17. S. Vevek Singh Majithia, Gorakhpur (U.P.)
 18. Shri K. S. Srivastava, Dehra Dun.
 19. Shri T. N. Srivastava, I.F.S., Dehra Dun

Ex-Officio Members.

Chief Wild Life Warden, U.P., Lucknow.
Wild Life Warden, Western Region, U.P.
D.F.O., Dehra Dun.
D.F.O., Saharanpur Division, Dehra Dun.

District Magistrate, Dehra Dun.
Superintendent Police, Dehra Dun.

Sub-Committees.

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| (1) Wild Lif Legislation | (3) Education and Propaganda |
| (2) Publicity | (4) Fishing. |

Postal Address :

Astley Hall, Dehra Dun.

Wild Life Preservation Society of India

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No. 2

Ourselves

In our previous issue we had pleaded for a greater degree of cooperation, in this part of the country, between our Society and the Forest and its wild life department. Our Society consists very largely of keen sportsmen, who will always be the most effective supporters of Wild Life Preservation, both because they hate to think of the disappearance of India's Wild Life, and because they want to see what they justifiably regard as a great and manly sport in a flourishing condition. The wild life of America, at one time in as great a danger of extermination as India's, has been happily saved. This has been done partly by a relentless war against poachers and partly by enlisting the enthusiastic support of sportsmen. In this part of the country it is being effected, or attempts are being made to effect it, by a relentless war against genuine sportsmen, and a closing of the eyes to the greater part of the extensive poaching that is being done.

Things are managed better in the south of India.

We should like to refer our readers, which we hope include the senior forest officers of the U.P., to a paragraph in an article entitled 'The Motor Car Poacher', in our October 1960 issue, written not by a disgruntled sportsman from Dehra Dun, but by Mr. E.R.C. Davidar, Honorary Superintendent of the Nilgiri Game Association.

We quote below this paragraph, unaltered, since it seems to us very apposite. "As regards indirect remedies, the greatest drawback in official planning for wild life preservation is the tendency to ignore the sporting public, the only members of the public who take any practical interest in wild life preservation. In many official circles the sportsman is treated on a par with the poacher and this greatly discourages sportsmen, who, out of sheer disgust, cease to take any interest in Wild Life Preservation, and in some cases even turn poachers. As a result of such short-sighted policy the cooperation of the stoutest champions of wild life preservation is lost. To give an instance, motor car poaching is comparatively scarce

in the Nilgiris mainly because of the existence of the Nilgiri Game Association, through which the sporting public are associated with wild life preservation. Even if there are motor car poachers they do not brag about their exploits openly, as they do in neighbouring districts, for the shame of it and for fear of being ostracized by sportsmen”.

We may add that we believe that the D.F.O. Ootacamund is ex officio Secretary of the Association, and the Association has its office in the Forest Office at Ootacamund.

The Nilgiri Game Association has been brilliantly successful in its efforts at conservation, as witness its successful preservation of that rare species the Nilgiri Tahr—or Saddleback Thex, and the successful survival, in fair numbers, of the cheetal in the lower parts of its jurisdiction.

If only there were the same picture in the U.P., we believe that everybody would be happy, including the species we are hoping to preserve.

To begin with the U.P. Forest Department, without any consultation with our Society, which contains many senior forest officers, abolished annual small game permits. These used to cost Rs. 40/- and entitled a sportsman to shoot in the Dehra Dun Forest Division, and, for a similar sum in the Saharanpur Division, jungle fowl, pheasants and peafowl, throughout the shooting season. These annual permits used to be issued for each division. Having done this, the Forest Department limited the monthly permits in the Saharanpur Division to four, though there are twice the number of jungle fowl on the Saharanpur side of the Siwaliks that there are on the Dehra Dun side, which receives twenty monthly permits. Any member of the Society could have told them this.

Then there came the banning of the shooting of peafowl throughout the U.P., though in the submontane divisions there is no religious objection to their shooting whatsoever. They will continue to be shot by crop-protection guns, since they do a certain amount of damage to crops, and the villagers appreciate their meat. A useless bit of legislation. Owing to religious feelings in other parts of India the peafowl is not in the slightest danger of extermination, and in this part of the country there would be no danger to it at all if wild life staff would prevent crop-protection guns from shooting them while roosting. Peafowl easily survived the shooting they were subjected to in the pre-Wild Life Department days because forest officers stopped poaching.

A short time before the 1961-62 small game shooting season the Forest Department produced two extraordinary ordinances—none know from whom they emanated. The first stated that there was to be no small game shooting allowed in the first half of the month. This means that the monthly permit holder can only shoot in the second half of the month,

and then only with the permission of the block-holder, or in such areas as are not allotted as big-game shooting blocks. This practically puts an end to small game shooting, unless you get a Saharanpur monthly permit limited to four only, where there are large, profitable areas not in allotted shooting blocks, or unless you get permission of a block-holder to shoot in his block, which is not so easy in the Dehra Dun Division.

If the Wild Life Department of the U.P. Forest Department really thought that jungle fowl were in danger of extermination it would have been far more honest to bann jungle fowl shooting altogether.

On top of this comes another ordinance: holders of a block for big-game shooting, plus their guests, may shoot no more than ten jungle fowl, not ten per gun per day, which would be reasonable, but for the whole party for the whole fifteen days of the tenure of the blocks, in other words about two-thirds of a jungle fowl a day. When one holds a big-game shooting block for the fifteen days allowed, one cannot go tiger shooting every day. One may get one or two or three chances at a tiger in the whole period. How else is one to employ one's time? Cheetal are not in season in December. Sambhar in some Divisions are banned. Is one to live on dal and rice for fifteen days? And how is one to employ one's leisure? One may read the meditations of 'Marcus Aurelius or Omar Khayam'; but this is not everybody's 'cup o' tea'.

It seems to us an absolutely unreasonable ordinance.

Actually the jungle fowl in the reserved forests, from our limited experience last season (1960-61), are more plentiful than we have known them before--and our experience dates back to 1940--particularly on the South side of the Siwaliks. Owing to the scarcity of permits we were mostly shooting alone with a small handful of beaters to put them up. We several times put up parties of twentyfive to a hundred from small patches of jungle and of these only a small portion were shot at. If the jungle fowl suffered no sensible diminution in numbers from the heavy shooting they were subjected to in the early decades of the century, when cartridges were Rs. 8/- per 100, why should they be in any danger with cartridges Rs. 180/- per 100, from the far fewer sportsmen who can still afford to shoot them? Netting by villagers, and possibly the collection of eggs in the nesting season may account for a good many and should be stopped.

Of course, owing to the great extension of cultivation and the large number of crop-protection gun licenses issued, jungle fowl have become scarce in many places where they used to be found which receive no protection from the Forest Department, but this is only to be expected. But there seems to be no need for the virtual prohibition of shooting jungle fowl and pea fowl in the U.P. Reserved Forests.

Another ordinance is that applications for blocks should be made to Lucknow. Previously it was the D.F.O. of the District that allotted blocks. He would be able to know if a certain applicant was a notorious poacher, and refuse to consider his application. Now a notorious poacher may apply to Lucknow, and, if it hasn't already been given to a Shikar Company or to a V.I.P., he may get his block.

We suggest, as we have suggested before, that our Society's representatives should meet the highest officers of the U.P. Forest Department, and thrash these questions out.

With regard to fishing we have no improvement in the situation to report. Bombing by military units and the P.W.D. continues unchecked. The Wild Life Department of the Forest Department seems to have lost interest. We have personally fished a number of times, with a monthly permit, in waters controlled by the Forest Department, and have never been asked to show our permit. Yet offences against the law continue unchecked. In a very short time the mahseer will become exterminated in the well known mahseer waters, and the Forest Department will continue to offer to our foreign visitors great fishing, and the latter will go away thoroughly disappointed.

Apart from fish, the problem of wild life preservation in the U.P. is extremely simple. It is entirely a question of preserving your deer. Stop the poaching of deer, and the tiger and the jungle fowl will look after themselves, the former because they will not all become cattle lifters, and so become proscribed and eventually killed off; the latter because the poachers of deer are also poachers of jungle fowl. In the old days, when the deer were really preserved, even though the 2nd Gurkhas used to have the right of shooting in all reserved forests, except where a block-holder was in occupation, and even though permits for jungle fowl were issued on a far more liberal scale, the jungle fowl survived in undiminished numbers, and so did the tiger.

You will not preserve wild life by proscribing the legitimate sportsman.

Editorial Notes

We have received the following note on the Society's working from one of our Vice-presidents and the 'de facto' father of our Society, Mr. P.D. Stracey, I.F.S. which we publish in toto.

"The third Annual General Meeting of the Wild Life Preservation Society of India was held in Dehra Dun on the 10th June, 1961, thus marking the expiry of three years of our existence as a Society. As the life of similar organisations, like 'the Bombay Natural History Society', 'the Wild Life Protection Society of Ceylon', or even 'the Fauna Preservation Society' goes, this is just an infant beginning, and we have a long way to go. Nevertheless, we can look back on the three years which have elapsed with a certain amount of satisfaction. The pessimists will always be there, who will say, 'What is the use'? but such persons exist in every moment the world over. Our membership has grown steadily and so has the record of what we have been able to achieve. Our magazine the 'CHEETAL' has come to stay, in a new cover design and with somewhat improved blocks. All this has been achieved within the compass of our still extremely humble funds.

It is this aspect of the position which we would wish to review here.

Three successive Annual Reports of the Society have shown a steady increase in our expenditure and the last report a sudden and large drop in our financial reserves, small as these have always been. However, we see nothing extraordinary in this in consideration of the expansion of our activities as befitting any growing organisation such as ours, where the actual efforts are to be directed towards the restoration of a position or the retrieving of a situation in regard to a living organism like the *Wild Life* of a country, deficits on actual working must be met by transfers from general funds each year and as long as these exist and are kept at a minimum safe level there is no reason for anxiety as to the continued existence of the Society as a whole. In fact, we should go so far as to assert that the mere accumulation of large reserves by a Society pledged to the saving of the Wild Life of a country is the negation of its very objections, for what is the use of thousands of pounds or lakhs of rupees, earning interest in investments or security deposits, when the wild life is actually disappearing for lack of dynamic activity directed to saving it? It is this particular aspect of our work to which we were pledged initially, i.e. to use our resources in a constantly expanding manner to save India's wild life from destruction before it is too late.

This does not, however, absolve the office bearers of a Society from exercising judicious control over expenditure and forethought in its management. For this the first stage is a budget, though this must not be so rigid as to discourage expansion activities of an unexpected nature, for that would stultify all efforts. Every society if faced with such unexpected demands during the course of a year's working, and provided they are subjected to the usual processes of scrutiny and sanction in Sub-Committee and Executive Committee stages, there can be no objection to their being met, even though not provided for in the annual budget, provided always that reserve funds are present to meet the extra expenditure. It is in this context that The Wild Life Preservation Society of India, bravely faces the future, in the full realisation that the situation is critical, and growing more so every day, for the Wild Life it is pledged to try and save."

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The Antlers of Cheetal in Captivity

According to Prater's "The Book of Indian Animals", cheetal stags shed their antlers in peninsular India in August or September, and the new growth is 'in velvet' till January. My observation of Cheetal in Northern India is very limited, but I have found that cheetal are usually 'in velvet' till December. I have observed them at close range from an elephant, cleaning their antlers in that month, and I have seen stags 'in hard horn' in December both in Northern U.P., and in the South of the old Madhya Pradesh. The present U.P. shooting rules vary. In some districts cheetal may be shot 'in hard horn only' irrespective of the month. This is a sensible rule, where sportsmen are scrupulously law abiding. No rules at all are of any use to 'motor car poachers'. In Dehra Dun and Saharanpur Division the open season for cheetal does not begin till April 1st. This may have been a wise device of former legislators to protect the cheetal stags from overmuch shooting, or it may have been because not all stags were 'in hard horn' till the end of March.

Whatever the answer may be, one may conclude that cheetal in the Northern U.P. may be 'in hard horn' anytime from December to June, and 'in velvet' from August till December, or even later.

But is it the same with cheetal in captivity? I observed once that the cheetal stag kept by the Forest Research Institute was 'in velvet' at a time when no wild cheetal would be. My curiosity was excited still more by the cheetal stag now in the possession of the Doon School. When acquired he had one antler, very much stunted, but, against all the rules, 'in hard horn' in November! Very soon he lost this. The base of the antlers, however, very soon started to swell, and now, about December the 20th he has the makings of a brow tine

and 'a beam', very heavily 'in velvet'. At the present rate of growth his antlers, still 'in velvet' will be fully developed, for his size, long after all his brethren are 'in hard horn'.

What is the explanation of this? Is it that the lack of competition from rival stags makes the possession of the harem, consisting of two delightful does, a cast iron certainty, so that antlers with which to fight rivals are a needless luxury? Or what? The ways of evolution and adaptation are most mysterious. I hope some Zoologist among our readers will shed some light.

Editor.

Book Review: A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

"SEONEE" BY STERNDALE.

In these days of rapid disappearance of jungle and of shortage of game of all kinds, when both the inclinations of the average person and the opportunities of indulging in shikar present such marked contrasts to those of the past, it is of absorbing interest to dip into the memoirs of some of the early British sportsmen and naturalists who once roamed India's happy hunting grounds.

One such is "Seonee" by Sterndale, an account of camp life on the Satpura ranges of the then Central Provinces, a hundred years ago. To the veteran sportsman the account of plentiful game and wonderful sport will be read with a certain nostalgia for the good old days; to the tyro it may bring feelings of revulsion at the excessive emphasis on the chase. But even as a portrayal of a particular kind of life which may have appeal to only some none can resist the style of writing, the interesting descriptions of hunting methods of the past, the instructive lessons in natural history and the fascinating glimpses of the Indian scene which the author gives us. Sterndale was, of course, the author of the "Mammalia of India", for long the standard book on Indian animals. He was a keen observer and gifted artist, witness his descriptions of the various species met with and his sketches of the same. The form of narrative adopted is peculiarly suited to the imparting of information on both shikar methods and techniques, as well as of instruction on the code of sportsmanship which was the hallmark of the British sportsmen of the times. The discourses of the elder of the two main characters

in the book, a Major Fordham, who was at the time engaged in land settlement operations in Seonee, to his young companion, a well bred English youth out in India on his first visit, are excellently framed and are as well suited to impart both interest and instruction to the tyro of those times as to the young sportsman of today.

Yet Sterndale's book is no mere record of the chase. His knowledge of the wild animals of Seonee was vast and his descriptions reveal his basic love for them, although the hero of the story seemed to have spent all his spare time hunting them. "Do you mind putting up with small game today and leaving the pig for the morning?" asks the elder of the younger sportsmen. "I want a live, adult male of the rib-faced or barking deer for my menagerie and so I gave orders for a small hill, which is supposed to contain one or two of these animals, to be surrounded by nets on three sides and driven on the fourth. We will take spears, in case we get a tough customer like a panther or hyena in the nets". His lively but accurate descriptions of the animals hunted and killed or caught, are classical in the knowledge of their anatomy and characteristics. His hero is both a dead shot and enthusiastic naturalist and even in the moments of excitement of the chase the hunter's keenness to kill was always tempered with pity for the quarry.

This is the description of the shooting of a nilgai with the aid of a bullock-cart: "as the young man looked at the dead blue bull he wished that the old fellow was still roaming the hill—it seemed to him a mean advantage, as the animals were so accustomed to come across the villagers' carts and took no heed of them. There was a tameness about the affair which took away from the satisfaction a hunter feels after he has had a struggle for his quarry". In his remarks about jungle-fowl coming out of a fire he says "it would be cruel to take a mean advantage, as they were flying for their lives". His comments on the custom of setting traps of split bamboo for breeding-fish in the rains are very revealing: "a reckless and improvident proceeding on the part of an ignorant people, which at the time had no check placed on it by their English rulers".

What a difference it might have made if the early British administrators, who had put down *thugs* and abolished *suttee*, had also taken stern action against the several local practices so destructive of wild life! At the time he was writing, reservation of forests had not yet commenced and the game laws had not yet been written and, while the British did a fairly good job of the former in the old C.P. (though elsewhere the best forest lands were given over to cultivation of tea and coffee) and later introduced shooting rules in the reserved forests, they seemed to have been singularly blind to the damaging aspect of such practices as the tribal *hakwa* or hunting drive, in which everything is killed. Alas! what may have been easy to stamp out then would be almost impossible to attempt today.

It was a time when the horse, the elephant, the camel and the bullock cart were the ordinary means of transport (the only railways in India were the Calcutta-Raneegunje and the Bombay-Thana lines), the dak was carried by pony stages or foot runners and the muzzle loader with the powder flask and balls had not yet given way completely to the breach loading weapon. The country was just beginning to be opened up and wild life was plentiful. The day's work, involving as it often did inspection rides across country, was punctuated by hunting of game. Nilgai and Sambhar were often ridden down and shot, the spear being reserved for the wild boar. Stalking, beating, sitting up and use of elephants were the main methods of shooting tiger and panther (it is to be noted that the term leopard occurs only once in the whole narrative) both of which were plentiful and were often met with on foot. The days of the electric flash light and later the jeep were, happily, still far away. Firearms were still the monopoly of the privileged classes and the deadly 'crop protection' gun was unknown.

In the rather flowery and pedantic language of a hundred years ago, with digressions on local traditions and stories of the country and lessons in natural history, the author carries the reader along, in an obvious effort to instruct and inform the budding sportsman. The opening chapter, with its description of tent life and its details of the Englishman's spacious manner of life with the numerous servants in neat attire in the India of those days, is fascinating. An elephant's ration was "thirty pounds of flour daily, with half a pound of ghee and half a pound of treacle to supply the place of butter and jam, besides which she was allowed as much as she could eat of grass, succulent branches and millet". The camp breakfast consisted of "omelettes and khichree—a favourite Indian dish of rice and pulse, boiled with savoury spices and served up with butter and fried onions, dry curries, a round of cold corned beef, potted wild duck, eggs, toast and chappaties—a species of thin, flour cake or scone baked on an iron plate—". And after the evening's hunting the campers would gather round a cheerful blaze, having disposed of a dinner consisting of "soup, sanwal fish from the lake, a roast haunch of black buck, pintail duck and blue-bull marrow bones, with a bottle of good Burgundy".

Administration was of that speedy, direct type which has now practically disappeared from India and, if the early British civilian was probably more in the hands of his *seristadar* and *nazir* than his Indian counterpart of today, he was not so file-ridden as is the latter. Making allowance for the peculiar circumstances of the early British rule in India and the natural distance between the ruler and the ruled, the main character of the book, Major Fordham displays a keen interest in the customs and traditions of the country and the conditions of the people. The prototype of the native shikari, later to become so familiar to generations of sportsmen, is faithfully described by him and he pays generous tribute to the local man's courage, armed as he was only with spear or talwar or at most with an old flint-lock

and to his endurance. The Pathan figures largely in the book, probably because the invasion from the north had but recently spent its force. The time was the period of the mutiny and in fact the hero meets his death leading his local irregulars in battle against the mutineers. Could the author have had in mind the famous Colonel Forsyth, the author of the "Highlands of Central India", when he drew his portrait of Major Fordham ?

But it must be admitted that even to the old '*Koi hai*' (if there are still any of that breed left in the country) the tale is one of almost unrelieved slaughter, when the sportsman shot at everything that was to be seen and even the shooting of females and game over water was countenanced. This cannot be excused, even when the plentitude of game that then existed, the monotony of the normal diet and the lack of other hobbies and pursuits are realised. It confirms one's suspicion that the rapid disappearance of game over many parts of India was due to the early British sportsman and his guns and his reckless use of them, as much as to any other factor usually associated with the 'opening-up' of the country.

There was a close knit friendliness, which has survived to this day, about the life of a headquarters station in India, when every district official had an elephant for baggage carrying and inspections, and which was used for shikar whenever the opportunity presented itself. The tiger, of course, was the piece de resistance. We learn that no less than 5% of tigers were reckoned as man-eaters and that cattle lifting was very common, although game was certainly very plentiful. This would seem to give the lie to the theory that these anti-social acts on the part of India's most attractive wild animal are the result of diminution of game and in particular the prey-species needed by the tiger and would indicate that cattle lifting and man eating have always been with us since the tiger entered India from the north. The reward for the destruction of a tiger in that part of the country was at first Rs. 20/- and finally raised to Rs. 50/-, which is puzzling, unless we are to associate the increased figure with the growing incidence of man eating or the improving financial position of the government. Crop-raiders were also a feature of those times, in spite of the abundance of vegetation and restricted agriculture. This drives home the fact that our wild life, unlike our poor, will always be with us and we must learn to live with it and not foolishly attempt to segregate, as some would advocate.

Such books as "Seonee" are hard to come by these days but they deserve to be read, both as a picture of bygone days where shikar is concerned and as a reminder of the courageous and sportsmanlike pursuit of a vanishing asset — India's wild life !

"P.D.S."

Miscellaneous Notes

Wildernesses.

We have had occasion in a previous issue of *The Cheetal* to refer to the growing cult, in America and Europe, of resorting to the 'Wilderness' (by which is meant the unspoilt outdoors) for recreation and relaxation. Nature in its wildest and most remote aspects has come to be recognised as the great tranquilliser, far surpassing in its long term effects the pills and tonics of our urban civilisation which are aimed at restoring the jangling senses and jaded nerves. The growth of this urge to camp and trek in the wildest, most inaccessible country, unspoilt by roads and speeding cars and all the garish clutter which we call progress, has been phenomenal. In the United States no less than sixteen and a half million people were expected to go to the wilderness in 1961. In the words of a writer on the subject "the city man has come to realise that the paper he pushes on his desk is without structure, that it is merely a promissory note guaranteeing that life and death do exist in counterpoint, that somewhere water is truly wet, the sun hot and the sand granular beyond human belief. He goes camping not to get away from it all ...nor does he go camping to relax, to simply fall apart, for this is what urban man has learnt to do all too well at home for the sake of his sanity: to relax, to stop reacting, to dull colours, muffle the sounds, dilute the smells". Thoreau, America's philosopher-writer, went to the woods at Walden Pond in 1845 because he wished "to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life."

But a great change has come over the camping industry since those days of primitive conditions and rough living. Luxurious camping grounds exist where a trekker can turn up with just the clothes on his back and hire a cabin, sleeping bag, ice-box cooler, towels and soap. Dancing, bridge tournaments, cocktail lounges, automatic laundries, television and ample electricity for all purposes are a feature of camps in most national parks these days. These are for the 'wilderness compromisers' who find it hard to give up their comforts merely because they are on vacation. Happily there are plenty of campers who still pack a few essentials and carry them on their backs, tramping the rough trails and sleeping in lightweight tents.

Except for Kashmir, where the tourist trade caters for campers in a style peculiar to that locality, we have nothing comparable with this wilderness movement. An Indian paper published the other day pictures of the Maithon project lake with landing stages, boats and rest houses all empty and waiting for the tourists who do not come. How many people from Delhi have tramped the bridle-paths in the Chakrata hills and enjoyed their wonderful forests,

so soon to be spoiled by motor roads? Yet with India's rapidly burgeoning population and rising standards, larger cross sections of her people will be demanding outdoor recreation of the wilderness type and it is not too early to start providing for it. The man-made lakes of our river valley projects and the hills of the surrounding catchments will offer considerable scope for tourist campers, if only adequate and timely steps are taken to protect them from the biotic factors of burning, grazing and felling. In fact, such protection is inherent in any such scheme if the life of the dam is to be extended to its maximum. But we want something more than this. We must plan for a real 'wilderness', in our mountains and our forests, where the more hardy and intrepid of our people and particularly the youth, will seek that something which cannot be had elsewhere. The development of Indian mountaineering is a happy sign, but this meets the needs of special groups only. What is wanted is the setting apart of large areas of still unspoilt country for perpetual protection from the corroding influences of the motor road, where only walking or riding will be permitted, and where nature will remain unspoilt, except perhaps for the catching of fish for food with rod and line. Are our tourist authorities alive to the need for this and will the governments give a lead in some such way as the Wilderness Bill of the United States, which seeks to preserve for the perpetual enjoyment of the people the yet unspoilt regions of that country?

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International Aid for India's Wild Life.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources launched in 1960 an "African Special Project" in an attempt to save the wild life of Africa from the rapid destruction which is overtaking it. The scheme,—which is to be carried out in three stages—preparatory investigation, a conference in Africa and the formation of an organization for follow-up work—will have an ecological basis and the assistance and co-operation of the local population will be essential. The Food and Agricultural Organisation has lent the services of an expert for the preparatory investigation, the expenditure on which has been met equally by the Fauna Preservation Society and the New York Zoological Society. The project was discussed and formulated at Warsaw at the time of the Seventh General Assembly of the I.U.C.N. and N. R. and is the result of a growing realisation that the large African mammals are a culture heritage which the world as a whole can ill afford to lose, apart from the fact that they constitute an economic asset of great potential for the developing African countries, for the wonderful African parks and sanctuaries are a great attraction for foreign tourists who bring in increasing amounts of money into the countries concerned.

The problem is a two-fold one: the protection of these fauna reserves and the management of the wild life stocks in outside areas, where they are at the mercy of the meat

hungry population. Here a totally new concept has arisen and one, which if successfully put over to the public and authorities in Africa, may bring a solution to the needless destruction of thousands of animals. It is that large, wild mammal populations, scientifically managed as a renewable resource and harvested regularly on the basis of a sustained annual yield, may yield protein food for human beings particularly in areas where domestic livestock cannot be maintained because of the prevalence of the tsetse fly. For a million years parts of Africa have produced wild 'meat animals' at rates comparable with the multiplication of domestic stock, without destruction of soil or grazing. There seems no reason why research on such breeding and on the management of the habitat of wild ungulate populations cannot be successfully translated into terms of tonnages of 'wild beef' to feed some portions of Africa's hungry millions. Scientific harvesting of such stock would be preferable, in any case, to the wasteful hunting methods of the local natives whose snares and poisoned traps destroy and waste much more than can be consumed. If the local population can be convinced of the possibilities of such a scheme and persuaded to give up their present wasteful hunting methods, the future of Africa's wild life would be much less bleak than it is.

While we wish every success to the efforts being directed to the saving of Africa's wonderful fauna, we cannot but feel a little envious of the attention it receives from international conservation organisations. Although in the realm of spectacular India has nothing to compare to the teeming herds of Africa's wonderful large mammals our wild life, taken generally, is more varied than and as interesting as that of Africa. For over a hundred and fifty years it has been intimately known to generations of British, who both administered and earned their livelihood in this country, apart from the contacts brought by two world wars and particularly by World War II, when thousands of American and Commonwealth soldiers were in India. It can, moreover, claim some attention from the many sportsmen who have 'enjoyed' India's wild life, in shooting etc. That this has not been the case may be the result on the one hand of an idea that all is well with India's wild life and on the other of the failure of the authorities concerned to bring home to the world at large the desperate plight it is really in. India's efforts towards the solution of some of her more dramatic problems, such as conserving her water and soil resources and her attempts at industrialising her economy, may have held the stage to the exclusion of such problems of low priority as the disappearance of her wild life. The well intentioned efforts of her ten year old Board of Wild Life, which, while compiling an impressive record of discussions on wild life problems, has achieved comparatively little with the States, where the real problem of practical protection lies, may have obscured the issues and contributed to a feeling of complacency both within and without the country.

But it would be the greatest disservice to India's wild life to accept the position as it is and we would urge both efforts to throw light into dark places and attempts to secure international and particularly British, interest in and sympathy for the problem of rescuing India's wild creatures from the current of public neglect and Government apathy in which they are struggling for their existence and placing them on a secure foundation for the enjoyment of our future generations. The large number of the generation which knew India in the past twenty years or so and whose comparatively recent and still fresh contacts with the country would be a guarantee of their interest, once efforts were made to elicit it, could be relied upon to support a movement to save India's wild life if an appeal were launched by a suitable authority. For this role we can think of none so suitable as the Fauna Preservation Society (once exclusively of the British Commonwealth, we would remind our readers) supported by similar Indian bodies. What is wanted is a systematic survey of conditions in comparison with what they were ten or even fifteen years ago, an internally sponsored conference in Delhi designed to focus attention on the question and efforts to persuade the authorities to give higher priorities to the problems involved and to provide funds for greater publicity and propaganda (which we believe is the crux of the matter in India) and for special game staffs to supplement the efforts of overworked forest staffs who are at the present moment the maids-of-all work where wild life is concerned.

We have not the problem of a meat-hungry population as in Africa and our agriculture economy should generally be able to support the largely vegetarian population, which lives in the rural areas side by side with our wild life. What we need is a realisation that the food fads of certain sections of the people, which are mostly met by the operations of semi-professional meat hunters, in which the pseudo crop protection gun plays a large part, is steadily decimating the wild life stocks on the fringes of the reserved forests (within which our sanctuaries are contained) and even inside them, that the misguided attempts at extending agriculture in lands not basically suited to crops instead of concentrating the efforts on intensive cultivation are in the long run wasteful of human energy and money and that such lands could more profitably be diverted to forests and wild life; that the damage to food stocks is more from rats, birds, insects and monkeys instead of from deer and pig and that in the maintenance of that delicate balance so essential for a healthy rural economy the aim of completely eliminating the so-called enemies of the cultivator should be replaced by attempts at controlling the damage—species with its natural predators—in other words that the balance of nature should be preserved. Finally and this may well prove the most powerful argument) the economic value of India's wild life, in the attractions it holds for the foreign tourist at the present moment but which it will undoubtedly have in the future for an Indian public

liberated from the shackles of poverty and in an era when the country's development plans will have been fulfilled deserves to be driven home more forcibly than at present.

These same international bodies could be looked to for the essential expenditure in connection with the carrying out of the necessary preliminary surveys while for the financing of a subsequent programme of active propaganda and education, allied to strong executive action for the enforcement of the available or improved legislation, surely the country can look to the dispensers of India's finances for more liberal allocation of some of the funds she is receiving in aid from abroad?

P.D. Stracey, I.F.S.

[Surveys take time. What is wanted immediately is that the administrative services including the Police as well as the Forest Service enforce the existing game laws and cease to promulgate irritating restrictive ordinances, which merely exasperate the keen shikari, who is also the most effective conservationist. Moreover we should not ask for international financial support. Our Wild Life is our own concern. We should be able to finance it ourselves.—Editor.]

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It is interesting to note that the late Jim Corbett, after leaving India and settling in East Africa, founded a wild life preservation society at Nyeri in Kenya of which he became the honorary secretary in 1949. At that time Corbett must have been over seventy years of age! It will be recalled that Jim Corbett had helped to found the Wild Life Preservation Society of the United Provinces in the '30s, and was, with Hassan Abid Jafri, the joint honorary secretary for several years, editing the journal "Indian Wild Life". The war and subsequent events and Corbett's departure for Africa, put a period to these efforts for wild life.

Jim Corbett's example, even in his advanced years, of work for wild life is worthy of emulation. Many old sportsmen, after having enjoyed wild life in their active years, 'retire' so completely that they will not lift a little finger to help in a situation which is fast deteriorating. In fact, several old 'Koi hais' whom we know are so indifferent and pessimistic about any effort to save India's wild life, that they will not even join our society and forget the good times they have had—shooting, fishing etc. will not "put something back in the kitty" for future generations.

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The strong reactions aroused in the U.K. by the hunting expeditions of the Queen and her party during their visit to India and Nepal in the cold weather of 1960, were as surprising as they were unexpected, particularly in regard to the shooting of tigers.

In India, where tiger shooting is an accepted part of the life of the country, it was all the more surprising that there should have been a storm of protest from the British, with certain sections of whom it was almost a ritual when they ruled India. Perhaps it was the detailed publicity that surrounded the Jaipur tiger shoot, with the impression that might have been created in the sporting British mind of escape, which was responsible for the revulsion of feeling against what was after all a traditional sport of India. Certainly this must have been the case over the killing of the unfortunate cow rhinoceros in Nepal. Even Indian opinion must have been revolted by the thought of three hundred elephants being used in the impounding and killing of a solitary tigress and a wretched cow rhinoceros, whose calf was fortunately too small to be also shot.

We join in the universal protest against and condemnation of the killing of the rhinoceros, one of a comparatively small number of a vanishing species only to be found on the Indian subcontinent, and hope that some little of the repugnance which it engendered in Great Britain has got through to the still feudalistic king of Nepal and that it will contribute towards the stoppage of an out-dated and anachronistic custom. Unwittingly the Queen and her Consort, the Duke of Edinburgh, may have started the first step in the more complete protection of the Nepal rhinoceros and have done something valuable towards the preservation of the species as a whole.

*[*Tiger shooting in India is as much an institution as pheasant shooting and deer stalking in Great Britain, and the conventional beats organised by the Maharaja of Jaipur for his royal guests involved no more brutality than the killing of a thousand pheasants or grouse on big shoots in England. We fail to see why their Royal Highnesses should be compelled to fall in with the views about shooting of every left wing journalist.—Editor.]*

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We have received the following suggestions to the Andhra Pradesh Wild life Advisory Board, which the latter have agreed to consider, from Mr. Lateef Mehdi, M.B.O.W., F.Z.S.

1. L. G. Cartridges of 12 bore gun are responsible for heavy destruction of wild life. Suggest they be banned from sale.
2. Maximum number of cartridges allowed on rifles (except .22) should be reduced considerably on all the licences.
3. Muzzle loaders possessed by farmers for crop protection are also responsible for the destruction of wild life to a great extent. Suggest the barrels of these weapons be cut short so that muzzle velocity is reduced.

Most of the licence holders are ignorantly massacring animals not knowing their value. This could be overcome to a certain extent by distributing short literature on wild life preservation in the form of a booklet to all who possess weapons.

5. Unsporting ways of shooting by the help of a spot light which proves to be a stronger weapon than a gun to some of our modern sportsmen, should be discouraged.

6. Heavy fines for poaching should be imposed. Anyone reporting a case of poaching should be rewarded by the Government.

7. Stricter control should be enforced by the forest department to prevent poaching, by increasing the number of game wardens and their emoluments so that efficiency is maintained.

8. Shooting permits should be stopped especially for carnivorous and herbivorous game for a period of atleast five years.

9. Though an expensive proposition, Government should endeavour to make a film on the Andhra Pradesh Wild Life, so that people in towns could appreciate the value of it.

10. School children should be taught the value of our diminishing wild life.

[We are in full agreement with all these points except No. 8. To stop shooting entirely for a number of years is simply to hand over your Wild Life to the poacher, who will make short work of it. The best Wild Life Warden is the legitimate sportsman. Shooting under proper control, with reasonable bag limits by permit holders should, at all costs, be retained. If you do not allow this the Forest Department will sit back and do nothing. It has often been proved that the presence of licensed sportsmen has been one of the most effective measures against poaching.—Editor.]

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In this issue of CHEETAL the Editor has mentioned what he calls new ordinances by the Government, and the ever changing rules for Permit-Holders. It may be noticed that Government Rules are not observed by the local officials, and they make them as they like, in spite of what they actually are, or stand for on the statute. Rules should be precise, till changed by the Authorities.

For Example, a form 'C' Permit-Holder under the rules and previous custom, can either shoot in vacant blocks, or with the permission of a block-holder in a reserved block. But in the case of the Saharanpur Division, the issuing authority puts down on the permit his own ordinance, which is:—

"This permit is not valid for areas where a form 'A' Permit is in force, nor for the V.I.P. Block"

in spite of the block-holder's permission. Which means that even with the permission of a block-holder, a form 'C' permit-holder cannot shoot in any block, even when this may be vacant. I referred the matter to the Chief Wild Life Warden, U.P. Lucknow, and he was of the opinion that the V.I.P. Block when vacant is open to shooting by form 'C' permit-holders just like any other block.

If form 'C' (Bird and Ground Game) permit holders cannot shoot with the permission of the block-holders in blocks reserved for the latter in the second half of the month, then why are form 'C' Permits issued at all for this period? Is it just to collect fees and virtually ban actual use of such permits?

The Society is endeavouring to help and work hand in glove with the Authorities concerned with conservation of wild life, at the same time to see that genuine sportsmen are not put to undue difficulties as compared to law breakers and poachers.

It was to this purpose that we suggested taking October and March into the close season for shooting murghis owing to the fact that in October the chicks are not strong enough to fly properly, and in March hens are actually laying or sitting on eggs. We are also against catching game and collecting eggs for despatch to Foreign countries. We have repeatedly drawn the attention of the Authorities to these problems, and hope that they will act in this matter, in all the States of India.

Gurkirat Singh Mann,

Hony. Secretary, Wild Life Preservation Society of India.

The Rogues of Assam

By W. LOWRIE CAMPBELL

[“The author does not pretend to claim good elephant hunting techniques for this true experience and advises against others using some of the methods he employed. He would also like to suggest that one of our expert and experienced elephant-hunting members write an objective treatise on methods of rogue destruction. We are reading more and more appeals from Assam and Orissa for help in destroying animals which are taking advantage of human frailties”.]

Last November my wife's cousin, Edson Spencer, and his wife Harriet, together with their travelling companions, the Bill Gregorys, came to India for a visit. This event proved to be an ideal excuse to organize a trip to the jungles of Assam, to show them one of the loveliest “off the beaten path” parts of India, and at the same time to do some tiger shooting from elephant back.

I got in touch with Rev. Wilbur Sorley, a Baptist missionary living in Tezpur, and was delighted when he consented to organize our stay in the tiger country which also coincided with his Christian missionary district. Wilbur is a man dedicated to his calling of service to the Indian people and we were fortunate in choosing a time when he was able to take a small vacation. Gerry Hyde, an officer of the Administrative staff of the Calcutta Consulate General, completed our group. He worked and hunted tirelessly and cheerfully, contributing thereby to the fun that we all had.

We flew to Tezpur from Calcutta and were met there by Wilbur and his wife, whereupon we went up to the Baptist Mission of Harisingha to stay in the guest house. We spent the first two days unsuccessfully baiting and driving tigers which had been seen and were there, but were most canny and well-protected by the heavy long grass which doesn't dry up until about March. No one got a shot, although Gerry did see a big striper during an all-night vigil in a tree machan while sitting over a cow which had been lightly mauled by the tiger that same morning.

Wilbur Sorley had been given an Elephant Control license by the Government of Assam and had recently been under considerable pressure from the District Commissioner to do something about the serious depredations of wild elephants in farmlands lying in India but immediately adjacent to the great forbidden jungles of Bhutan. The elephants had even been getting press space in Calcutta papers this year as they had arrived before the rice was ripe

and had, therefore, taken to knocking down native houses and smelling out rice and grain supplies which they happily devoured. In a few instances elephants also drank up rice wine which they found in these houses, causing, so they say, some pachydermous staggering around which resulted in additional real estate damage. During all this gluttony a number of people were killed and maimed, so, as you can easily imagine, the countryside had been harried with fear and not a little sorrow. This whole picture was getting even worse as the rice fields ripened, because the elephants went into the standing crops and, if left unmolested, nightly destroyed great tracts of the livelihood of the area. The villagers set up huts in the fields and with lanterns and kerosene flares tried to protect the crops. Several elephants in the area developed an aggressive resentment over this kind of interference while feeding and occasionally knocked down huts and chased farmers with serious, deadly intent.

Wilbur decided to drive up to the worst area, about ten miles from our hunting headquarters, and spend our third night there sleeping in his jeep. I offered to go along and he welcomed the company, but said he had never hunted elephants before and so could not be responsible for anyone else. Frankly neither of us expected to do more than spend a cold night cramped in the jeep or out on the ground nearby in sleeping bags.

Part way up to the rice-growing valley which was our ultimate destination, we stopped in a village which had been reported to Wilbur as being partly destroyed by elephants a few weeks earlier. We only intended to make general inquiries, but a group of excited villagers came tumbling out of shut-up houses, excitedly jabbering that they had managed at dusk to chase a big tusker rogue away from the edge of the village and into the rice fields across the nearby river. Since indiscriminate elephant slaughter is unlawful and severely punishable by the courts of Assam, we asked if they were certain that this was a rogue. We were told that this animal was unmistakable because of its huge long tusks and great size, that it had levelled many homes and only the night before had seriously injured a man who had tried to chase it away. The story of this chase and the resulting injury gradually emerged from various accounts we heard during the next few days. Three friends discovered the rogue in a jungle patch near the village, waiting for night to fall before it commenced its nightly paddy meal. They decided to fortify their courage with a few jugs of rice wine before sallying forth against him. One of the triumvirate managed to "sneak a few" on his pals and, when they went forth with sticks to the elephant's vicinity, although his two companions promptly decided to run, he-of-the-extra-snort weaved and waved his stick at the cowardly blackguard, enjoining him to "come out". This the beast unexpectedly did, knocking poor old stinky to the ground with his rush and proceeding to gouge at him with his tusks, inflicting some damage to the man's head. When we left the area, this individual was still living, but was on the critical list at the district hospital.



The first Tusker Rogue showing bullet holes just below the left eye and in front of the left ear.



The Rev. Wilbur Sorley with the dead Mukhna, which he finally finished.

We started out on foot but soon lost all track of the elephant as it had re-crossed the river below the village. A two-mile drive circled us above and around the village area to a large stretch of rice-fields, surrounded by strips of jungle, where one of the farmers said this elephant sometimes visited. The moon was almost full, but there was a light overcast making visibility uncertain. I have a good pair of binoculars which improve night hunting considerably and with these we found the tusker rogue, consuming rice about 150 yards away, but quite near the edge of the woods. He had probably seen our jeep lights and my flashlight, as he was facing directly towards us with his ears straight out, having for the moment stopped his feeding. As I realized that we would be trying to kill this animal, some of the weirdest sensations, dominated by fear, swept over me and were to stay with me for the next two hours. We repeatedly tried to get the ever-changing breeze in our favour so we could get close enough to the tusker through whatever cover we could find. We were pretty skittery about it for quite a while and once he sprinted into the jungle when we thought he was sliding along the edge of the trees out of sight in our direction. Finally, a quick shift in the very light breeze carried our human aroma to him and he stomped off across a stream toward other rice fields in the distance. Our old farmer guide, who had accompanied us to the spot where we first saw the rogue and had stuck around, albeit with occasional bursts of reverse speed, now took us around by another road to the general area to which the old tusker had moved off. We waded the small stream which we had heard him cross and climbed the bank beyond to the edge of open rice fields. About seventy yards away was the rogue, facing us but feeding unsuspiciously. There were bushes where we stood, but the nearest trees were fifty yards behind us and across the stream. After a whispered consultation, we decided to follow a short row of bushes which would take us close in. Wilbur was leading when I suddenly realized that we would be naked as jaybirds, cover-wise, because an elephant doesn't rely on eyesight but on sound and smell—both of these senses being extremely acute. In other words, if he came for us, the bushes would deter him no more than blades of grass and he could bore in on double smell and sound beams. At this juncture fear established a grip on me and became even more acute when I recalled that a man cannot outrun a fast-charging elephant. I now decided to try a little summit whispering with Wilbur about this cover problem. He got my meaning but hesitated hardly at all, giving me an answer which my missionary background would have prepared me for under different circumstances but which, at that moment, shook me further, if, in fact, increased shaking on my part was then possible. "The Lord is our cover", quoth he. "Nuts, Wilbur", I jabbered, in an almost too loud, quavering rejoinder, "the Lord's a better friend of yours than mine", but we proceeded to move down the line of bushes to the last one, Wilbur leading. Looking over this bush we saw the rogue moving faster towards us and diagonally toward our left. He seemed to be on top of us when he came to a sudden dead

stop and turned slightly our way, appearing for the first time to be aware that things were somehow amiss. By previous agreement, Wilbur and I were to shoot as simultaneously as possible, but with Wilbur squeezing off first, because of his greater hunting experience and the technicality of his possessing the elephant license. As the rogue stopped, our .375 magnums came up and it seemed an age to me before Wilbur fired. My shot followed his so closely that there seemed to be two simultaneous flashes of flame in the night. The big tusker dropped straight down into a sitting position and never again made the slightest move, though Wilbur decided to hit him once more in the spine to make sure. Man oh man! The relief we felt and expressed to each other as we gradually realized he was down to stay! We paced off the distance and it was $15\frac{1}{2}$ yards from our bush to the nearest tusk! We had used 300 grain solid bullets, one of which hit just in front of the ear opening and about 4 inches above it, while the other entered an inch below the left eye. Though the elephant was considered a big one, he was only $9\frac{1}{2}$ feet at the shoulder. His removed tusks ran 6' 4" and 6' 8". We had no way of weighing them and I have not yet heard how heavy they are.

Chapter II of our rogue hunting started soon after we shot Packy I. It was after midnight and we decided we couldn't go back to base. Following the excitement of the last few hours, the possibility that we would be able to sleep was remote, nor would we be able to refrain from waking up the rest of the camp to tell them about our adventures to date. We, therefore, decided to proceed north to the rice growing valley I mentioned earlier. This valley is not really a valley, but rather a long finger of rice fields about three miles long by one mile wide, bounded on the west by jungle grassland and bamboo forest belonging to a couple of tea estates. A good motor road ran parallel to the river valley a hundred yards inside this western fringe of jungle and along the top of an elevated ridge. On the east side the boundary is a good-sized mountain river, beyond which is heavy jungle classified as game sanctuary. To the north are more heavy jungles, rolling endlessly into Bhutan, the border of which forbidden state is only a couple of miles from the upper end of the area described.

As we drove into this clearing we saw that there were lights scattered through the fields. These were placed outside grass huts, constructed by the villagers to give them a place to rest while guarding their crops at night. From one spot we could see a dozen or more of these lights. We turned east on a rough track and drove a few hundred yards to a small cluster of neat and clean houses in the middle of the valley belonging to "John" and some of his relatives. John is a Christian farmer who doubles in brass as Wilbur's local padre. A very bright and dedicated man, especially dedicated to his Sorley Sahib. We pulled into this farmstead at about two o'clock in the morning. For reasons soon ascertained we found the people huddled in their houses fully dressed and looking very frightened. During the season of elephant raids, night becomes day and sleeping is done while the animals in question

are also sleeping in the nearby green jungles. The extra degree of alertness in this little community, which we sensed right away, was due to a visit to their fields an hour or so earlier by the dreaded "mukhna", a tuskless male elephant. This mukhna was blamed for some fearful misdeeds by the people of the valley and some of them were most certainly his work alone, while other crimes could be laid entirely, or in part, at the door of a huge tusker rogue with whom the mukhna often kept company during the nights when they were both raiding these fields. This tusker had one crooked tusk and one very small or broken-off one, and was a fully proscribed, much wanted criminal after many years of outlawry. Despite the crooked tusker's past record with the Forest Department, it was the mukhna that the farmers begged us to kill. He it was they said, who had this year attacked a woman outside her home, had torn her into two pieces—then deliberately picked up her child and killed it by throwing it on to the roof of the house. It was the mukhna who had killed a little girl from Pastor John's own family not many days before our arrival in his little community. It was the mukhna who had, on the second Sunday before Thanksgiving Day, trampled a rice guard's hut in a screaming rage and had injured a sleeping little boy so badly that he died on Thanksgiving day, while we were there.

Having heard that the mukhna had been there alone and had been successfully chased off, we asked John and his brother to guide us in the direction he had gone. We went across the fields towards the east, inquiring of rice guards in their huts, almost all of whom had that night heard or seen the mukhna rogue and shuttled us along to the next guard house. We were routed through some bamboo jungle at the edge of the valley, near the river, where visibility was very poor. The clouds were heavier and were shrouding the full moon. As we came gratefully out of this bamboo jungle back to the rice fields, we heard a man scream about a quarter of a mile away in the fields, and suddenly there were flaming flares in the night carried by running and shouting men. We ran up to a nearby guard and were told by some frightened and excited men that the mukhna had gone in the direction of the noise and had obviously just done in another victim. (Partly true, we found out later that the man had injured himself while being chased and had narrowly avoided death when his friends turned the attacking elephant). The dancing flares joined together in a knot and went off slowly toward the north. We deduced that they were either taking the injured man to the village or chasing the elephant with an impressive show of flame, into which even a rogue will not charge. Our second guess was the right one, because as we stumbled toward the torch bearers, we suddenly heard more hoarse shouts, quickly followed by the screams of an enraged elephant, then general bedlam. We didn't stop to conjecture, soon arriving at a guard hut just demolished by the screaming mukhna. Three or four shaky men stood around, all having managed to escape while the elephant was taking his wrath out on the

hut. We kept going, now headed west toward the jungle and the tea garden road, after not one rogue but two ! The mukhna had somewhere along the way been joined by his friend, the crooked tusker ! As we neared the high grass and trees we heard both entering the heavy cover and going on into the jungle, feeding off trees as they went. We stopped to collect ourselves and think a while and then crept in after them, but only as far as the road. Beyond that was high grass which looked suicidal.

After trying to stretch on the ground for a quick nap and losing the argument to mosquitoes, we wandered back to the car as the dawn crept up. We drove the car to a point from which John thought we could easily reach a heavy bamboo jungle where the elephants might be spending the day. Some tree climbing and jungle searching soon impressed us with the old needle and haystack business, so we drove the twelve miles back to the Mission, caused a sensation among our companions which we knew we would with our story, drove out to the first dead elephant for some picture-taking, then back again to grab a few hours sleep before heading for elephant valley to set up another night's vigil.

On this return engagement the gang was all there, as they had been kicking themselves all day for not having shared the first night's excitement. We took sleeping bags as we were half prepared to spend an eventless night.

[*W. Lowrie Campbell, author of, and participant in this true story account, is a Foreign Service officer of the United States Government posted to the American Consulate General in Calcutta, India. He was raised as a child in India and has lived there, off-and-on, most of his life. His father was a missionary and spent over forty years of his life serving the people of that country.*]

The Devil

One evening in May, two men came to my house. They were milkmen, not living far from our school. It was just past 7 p.m., and my family and I were getting ready for supper. The milkmen informed me that a leopard had killed one of their cows in broad daylight. This was the second cow that the devil had killed within the last week. As this milkman was a poor man, this killing of cows would soon ruin him. His children would starve. The man also informed me that the leopard was "this big" and it occasionally killed buffaloes. Having heard these stories of "this big" often, I passed it off as an exaggeration. Then I asked him what he had done after the leopard had killed his cow.

"Nothing Sahib, I have just come to inform you".

I put the same question to him again, "What did you do?"

"Well," he replied rather sheepishly, "I and a few other men cut all the bushes out from around the kill, to make it easier for you to see and shoot the devil."

I told him that what he had done would not help either of us, as the devil might get suspicious and not return to the kill. He answered that it would return. This is no ordinary leopard. He is not afraid of men. I told the milkmen to return to their homes, as it was rather late in the evening. However, I also told them I would be over in the morning to see for myself. Just as they were leaving I asked how far it was to the kill. They informed me that it was only a mile. With that they departed saying they would meet me in the morning.

After supper I was telling my wife what the milkmen had to say. I was also weighing the chances of the leopard showing up after having seen these cut bushes. Some leopards do get exceedingly bold and their boldness was usually the cause of their downfall. I was convinced that this leopard would not come back. He would probably get suspicious and never show up. So I went to sleep thinking of this devil.

Next morning I was up early, had a cup of tea and started walking towards the village from where the milkmen had come. After about two miles, I decided that it was about the longest mile that I had ever walked. It took me about an hour to reach the village and another half an hour to the kill.

After looking the kill over and finding out in what manner the leopard had killed the cow I was most interested. It wasn't a clean kill, it looked as though the leopard had to claw the cow into submission. However the main thing that interested me was the fact that the

leopard had come and eaten off the cow. He had eaten very little possibly because he came just before it got light. The leopard had probably moved down the Nulla to where he could lie in the thick cover and keep cool.

I noticed a tree that was near the kill. It was the only tree around. On this occasion I was lucky to have a tree to sit in, on previous occasions I had to sit on the ground, which didn't particularly appeal to me. With the help of the milkmen I made a machan. The machan was about 25 feet higher than the path but only about 12 feet higher than the kill. After completing the job to my satisfaction, I lit a cigarette, handed a few out to the milkmen and asked a few more questions about the leopard. On one point they all agreed: it was the biggest leopard they had seen. After finishing my cigarette, I started back for school.

All day long I couldn't concentrate on my work. I was thinking of that leopard. I had seen his pug marks and I noticed that they did seem rather big, but I wondered how "this big" the leopard really was.

In the afternoon I had to attend a meeting, which, it seemed, would never end. Everytime I thought there was no further discussion on this or that point someone would come up with a bright idea. There would be further discussion until the idea didn't seem so bright after all. However the meeting finally ended at 4-30. I ran down to the hostel, picked up my gun, a blanket, a thermos full of tea and my flashlight.

I reached the kill about 6 p.m. and sat on a stone and smoked a cigarette and waited for my sweat to evaporate. At 6-20 I climbed up into the machan. The kill was about 25 yds. away and that looked like an awful long way, and I knew that it would look even further when it got dark. Now was not the time to think of such things, but in a way I wished that I had thought of it a while back. At about 7-10 some milkmen passed under the tree I was sitting in. They were talking about how easy it is to fool the milk inspector. I was glad to notice that they had not seen me or the kill. The kill was about 20 feet away and higher than the path.

7-15 (there was still enough light to shoot). All of a sudden a kakar started to bark and I knew that the leopard was coming. I checked the gun. Everything seemed all right. I pushed the safety off. 7-20. Some Lungurs sent their alarm calls screaming across the valley. Now I was sure that the leopard was coming, for lungurs never call at humans. My heart rises a beat, now I know that the "devil" is near the kill. Suddenly I feel that I am making too much noise. I realize that it's my heart and my breath. I open my mouth. Now it doesn't make so much noise. I look at my hands. They are quite steady. A foolish grin

comes to my face. Then I see something slithering phantom-like through the brush. My grin has now left my face. I know that now I can barely see my sights. Then the devil steps out of the bush about 15 feet on the far side of the kill and stares directly at the machan. The question kept running through my brain, should I shoot now or wait till he starts eating. Perhaps he has seen me, and is ready to run. I decided that I would take no chances on his running away. I took aim at his heart and slowly started the squeeze—wham! The devil falls. I send off another shot, just to make sure that I get it. I didn't want to have to follow up this big leopard when it was wounded. I pick up the flashlight and turn it on. I can see blood coming out of the leopard's mouth. I look at my hands. They are no longer steady, but who cares? The silly grin comes back to my face again. I laugh softly and feel quite pleased with myself. I open my thermos and drink some tea. I also light a smoke. It tastes wonderful.

Somehow I get off the tree, with the gun and light in my hand, and walk slowly up to the devil. I stop near him to have a careful look. He still doesn't move. I can see now that he will never move again. My first shot caught him in the heart and the second in the head. I probably wouldn't have needed a second shot but with big cats and especially ones this big it is hard to say. I started walking towards the milkman's hut but he had heard the shots and met me half way. I told him that the devil was dead, and gave him my flashlight to go and see it. He took the light and then stopped and asked if I was sure that the leopard was dead.

I laughed and said, "Don't worry bhaji. The devil is dead. I stopped and checked before I came towards your hut." To make him feel better, I walked with him. As we reached the leopard, he stopped again and made way for me to go first. People in the city may find it difficult to understand the feeling our hill people have towards these big cats. These people have had their brother or relative or friend in the village taken in the village by some maneater.

It took 4 men 3 hours to carry the leopard to the hostel. We laid it on the verandah and awoke my wife and asked her to make tea for all of us. In the meantime I measured the leopard. He was 8 feet from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail. He weighed out at 226 lbs.

One of his canines were broken. Needless to say he was an old male. When skinning him I found two S.G. under his skin just above his right shoulder which explains why he couldn't kill too cleanly. I have no doubt in my mind that this leopard would have been a man-eater within a year.

As days went by and news travelled, many villagers came to see me and thank me for killing this devil. Many of them told me that this leopard had killed some of their cows. They said that he had become very daring and would kill in the daylight in the presence of many men.

One of the Pradhans of a village had bought a horse for Rs. 750.00. He very proudly rode it to his village. The very next evening it was killed by this leopard. Everybody around in the area knew the leopard because of its size.

Six weeks after I had shot the leopard I heard from the Forest Department. The Deputy Ranger informed me that his department had received a written complaint that I had shot a leopard in Government forest and that I had also shot a goral and a kakar in the same evening. Of course I was taken by surprise because I had shot the leopard in a private forest at the owner's request. I had always thought that the shooting of an animal which causes damage on a private estate, and which the owner asks you to shoot, was legal. I had a talk with the D.F.O. and told him the same. He was very understanding about the whole thing. He had carried out investigations about the complaint and found out that I had shot the leopard on private property and not in Government Forest as the complainant had mentioned. What makes me so sore is the fact that such complaints are usually sent in by poachers.

The D.F.O. also informed me about the new rule which really surprised me. "All animals belong to the Government as such. No one may shoot them until permission is obtained from the D.F.O. or the District Magistrate." This means simply that you can't shoot a man-eater who enters your estate and kills. By the time the official permission is obtained, (it might take a day or two) the leopard or tiger is long since gone. The same thing could happen again and again.

It seems to me that the lives of the villagers among these hills are less valued than the animals themselves. I am all for preserving wild life. I am also a member of this society, but I strongly feel a line should be drawn somewhere.

R. Kapadia,
Woodstock, Mussoorie.

The Present Status of Four Rare Animals of India

BY E.P. GEE

Any news of wild life preservation (or lack of it) in India, as in other parts of South Asia, must be examined against the background of a young democratic and liberal administration which has not sought to restrict the issue of licenses for firearms and which has encouraged rapid development and industrialization. The wild life outside the sanctuaries has suffered very much owing to the increase in human population and spread of villages and agriculture, and an equal increase in numbers of domestic cattle and buffaloes with consequent opening up of new areas for grazing.

With these changes it is inevitable that there should now be great pressure from all sides on the shrinking wild life population. Those animals and birds outside the sanctuaries have become considerably reduced in numbers in nearly all parts of the country, while those which are supposedly protected inside the sanctuaries have in many cases suffered losses from poachers and others.

Unless great care and vigilance are exercised by the State Governments of the Indian Union, the wild life of this country will be in danger of complete extermination in the not-far-distant future.

The Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros

The numbers of this species of rhino are believed to be on the increase, as far as India is concerned. Poaching for the horn is still going on in Assam, in Manas Sanctuary, and even in Kaziranga; and it may also be happening in Bengal. But, although the number of rhino in Manas Sanctuary has probably decreased in recent years owing to lack of full enforcement of the law, my impression is that in Kaziranga rhino have increased considerably. Two visits to Kaziranga in May 1961, have convinced me that this species, as well as the Indian Swamp Deer, is on the increase there in spite of sporadic poaching.

Although Nepal does not come into the purview of this note, reference could well be made here of the position of the rhino in that country. In my Report of 1958 I estimated that there were 300 rhino in that country, and this estimate was supported by the figures of those persons most qualified to express an opinion. It is extremely difficult to get any reliable information from Nepal on the subject, but from private sources (March, 1961) I understand that the number of rhino has decreased since the spring of 1958 and that it may

now be as low as 125. Also that everything is once again "in the melting pot", and that there are no Shooting Rules, no Forest Act, and no Wild Life Preservation Act.

The fact that a rhino, officially "protected" in Nepal, was shot in an organized 'royal' shoot early in 1961 indicates that no serious attempt at wild life conservation is yet being made in that country. It is hoped that the subsequent world-wide reactions against the killing of this cow rhino may somehow be effective in inducing the authorities in Nepal to fall into line with the rest of the world in conserving fast-disappearing species.

The Indian Lion

I visited the Gir Forest again for a few days early in November, 1960, sponsored by the Survival Service Commission of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. This visit was valuable for two reasons: firstly the 500-square-mile area of the Gir Forest had become part of the newly-created state of Gujarat early in 1960, and secondly there had been reports of poisoning of lions by disgruntled villagers who had had their cattle and buffaloes killed.

With regard to the new administrative situation, I am glad to be able to report that the Conservator of Forests (Junagadh Circle), the Divisional Forest Officer (Gir Division), and the Sub-Divisional Forest Officer (Sasan Gir) all appeared to be interested in the preservation of the lions and alive to the dangers that beset them. Gujarat was the only State of India (apart from the host State, Madras) which was represented at the meeting of the Indian Board for Wild Life at Ootacamund, in February 1961, by all three persons concerned with preservation—the Forest Minister, the Chief Conservator of Forests and the Wild Life Preservation Officer. There is a proposal to upgrade the Gir Forest area into a sanctuary or national park.

With regard to the lion population, there have been reports in the press from reputable local naturalists that many lions have been poisoned in the last few years and that the number of lions may now be as low as 100. The official Forest Department view, however, is that only a few (two lions, two lionesses and three cubs) have been poisoned and those on the fringes of the area, and that the number of lions now is about 250. Obviously it may be assumed that the real truth is somewhere in between these two figures. The 1950 rough census gave the numbers as 240, and the rough census of 1955 put the figure at 290. An effort is being made to conduct a census during April-May 1962, and reports of this are awaited.

My own impression is that probably 250 to 300 lions may be rather a large population for the area concerned, in view of the scarcity of natural game for them to feed on, resulting

in so many domestic cattle and buffaloes being killed. The Indian Board for Wild Life has been concerned with the problem of how to keep the numbers within reasonable limits. At the same time the local villagers and others obviously must not be allowed to take the law into their own hands : any "management" of the area and its wild life must be done only by the proper authorities.

During my brief visit I was able to see at close quarters three lionesses with three cubs, and also a pride consisting of one maned lion and three lionesses with seven cubs. The number of cubs seen was very gratifying, and my visit was made even more worthwhile by the very fine and well organized "lion-show" which I saw—and which visitors from any part of the world can see.

The lion and two lionesses which were captured in the Gir Forest and released (re-introduced) into Chandraprabha Sanctuary in Uttar Pradesh in 1957 are reported to be doing quite well. A cub was seen with one of the lionesses in February 1958, but subsequently was not seen again. In the spring of 1960 the other lioness was seen with two cubs. The latest news from the Government of Uttar Pradesh is that these lions are doing well and that the experiment is progressing satisfactorily. There are plans for clearing the area of tigers, leopards and wild dogs and to construct artificial lakes and salt-licks.

The Kashmir Stag

A brief visit (also on behalf of I.U.C.N.) to Kashmir and its Dachigam "Sanctuary" in November 1960 produced very disappointing results. Firstly I found that, in spite of Dachigam being officially said to be a sanctuary and the stag protected, in actual fact there was no act or even gazette notification in existence for protecting either the "sanctuary" or the stag. Secondly I was informed that the physical "count" which was supposed to have been done in the winter of 1957-58, after which the figure of approximately 550 head had been given to me, had been in reality only an estimate. And thirdly I was told that poaching of the stag was still going on and even that permits were being officially issued for the shooting of one or two stags per year by very important persons.

To add to this depressing news, Colonel H. Nedou, who was Game Warden of Kashmir from 1950—1954 and whose knowledge of the fauna of that State is probably unequalled, told me that he estimated that there were only about 250 Kashmir stags alive today. If this estimate is a true one, then the position of this rare and beautiful deer is very precarious indeed. Unless the Government of Jammu and Kashmir can immediately enact and enforce legislation to ensure the inviolability of Lower and Upper Dachigam and to protect the stag fully, this noble and valuable deer will inevitably go the same way as the Shou of Sikkim and Tibet.

It is difficult to understand how a State which is encouraging tourism should not have taken effective steps to preserve its wild life, particularly a rare and vanishing species which could be a major attraction to visitors from all over the world. I have myself visited Kashmir five times : in the months of April, May, September, October and November. I have seen the stag in Lower Dachigam in April and November, and in the alpine meadows and birch forests of Upper Dachigam in September. I can think of no lovelier place in the world than these parts of Kashmir and no animal of greater magnificence than the Kashmir stag.

On this visit I was particularly struck by the extraordinary beauty of Lower Dachigam "Sanctuary" in its autumnal array of colours. It defies all attempts at description. And in the undergrowth of willows and shrubs I caught a fleeting but never-to-be-forgotten glimpse of a grand ten-pointer in company with about twelve hinds and fawns. Is it not possible that this fine ten-pointer has since then fallen a victim to a bullet from the gun of a poacher ? or of a V.I.P. with a "legally" issued permit ? When a wild life species is in danger of extermination, is there much distinction between a poacher (who is probably unaware of the pressing need for conservation of a fast-disappearing species) and a V.I.P. who must by now be wise to the fact that India is losing much of her fauna ?

Surely the point has now been reached when the Kashmir stag should no longer be regarded as "royal game" by the authorities in Kashmir, as it was in the olden days. Unless all issuing of permits to V.I.Ps. for shooting stags can be stopped immediately, and unless poaching by villagers and "gujars" (graziers) can be checked effectively, then another fine deer is going to be lost to the world for ever.

The Brow-Antlered Deer

I visited Manipur during the months of October-November 1959 and March 1960 on behalf of I.U.C.N., in order to find out the present status of the Manipur subspecies of the Brow-antlered deer, locally known as *sangai*. (The Burma subspecies is called *thamin* and is also rare now, and there is another subspecies in southeast Asia which is feared to be right on the verge of complete extinction.)

A small ten-square-mile sanctuary for this deer has been created on the Logtak Lake of Manipur, and this sanctuary is remarkable for being a floating one. It consists mostly of floating humus (locally known as *phumdi* on which grow tall reeds and grasses up to 15 feet in height.

The Manipur Administration is taking a great interest in this deer, and I was able to see a few of them each time I visited. My rough estimate of their numbers is about 100, all in



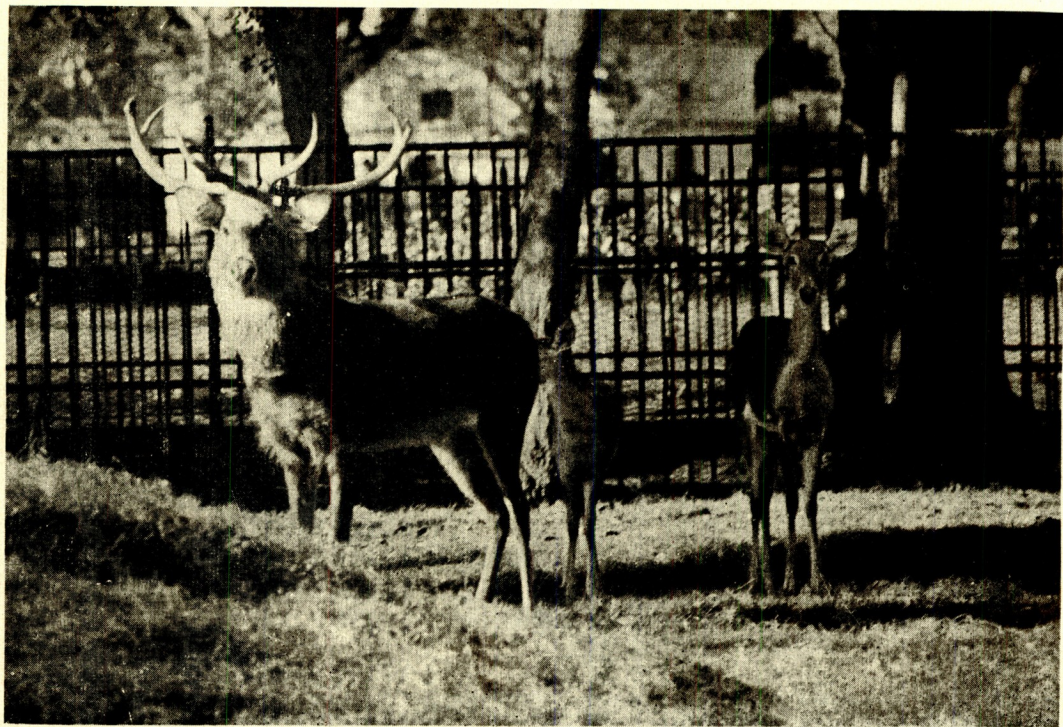
Great Indian One-horned Rhinoceros in Kaziranga, Assam.



Indian Lion in Gir Forest, Gujarat.



Kashmir Stag in Lower Dochigarm, Kashmir.



Brow-antlered Deer from Manipur in Alipore Zoo, Calcutta.

this sanctuary for there are none outside. In addition to being protected by law (at least on paper), these deer are fairly safe owing to the impenetrability of their last habitat—the floating humus which is mostly inaccessible to human beings, even in boats.

There are some administrative difficulties which the Manipur Administration in general and the Forest Department in particular are trying to overcome. As the sanctuary is mostly impenetrable and therefore the deer not visible to the public, I have recommended that a few of them be captured and kept in captivity in a suitable place in Manipur—preferably near Imphal town. A pair captured in 1956 is doing well in the Alipore Zoo, Calcutta, where a fawn has been born every year since then.

Game Preservation in the U.P.

Have the five years during which a certain emphasis has been placed on Game Preservation as such achieved any visible results? To my mind beyond the narrowing of the focus on an urgent problem, little has been accomplished. Conversely the situation has deteriorated in many ways, as previously the Forest Department whose subsidiary trust it was, was composed largely of officers who were interested in Wild Life and made it their business to see that their subordinate staff enforced the existing game laws. Nowadays the new recruitment consists largely of reluctant entrants to what once was a prize service, who spend as little time in the forests as possible. They are not interested in wild life and in many cases do not even possess firearms. In addition they feel that as there is a separate branch dealing with the subject they have no responsibility. Therefore, though the emphasis has changed from a purely departmental affair to one with a national bias the wild animal has not benefited. The Wild Life Department is a desultory creation emanating from the Centre and beyond being paid occasional tributes by the holding of Wild Life Weeks and extolling its virtues as a Foreign Exchange earner, little is done. The State Ministries are completely apathetic and lack all understanding of the problem.

Wild Life Preservation like all labours with intangible results has to be a dedicated service and it stands to reason that it should have a separate Department. This would ensure that employees depended for promotion on their own achievements and apart from enjoying a continuity of service making for interest and experience they would not be subjected to the

frustrations which are now their lot as an adjunct of the Forest Department. The present Wild Life Department was originally constituted with a senior Conservator of Forests as Chief Wild Life Warden and Wild Life Wardens of the rank of Divisional Forest Officers at the rate of one per five divisions, assisted by Assistant Wild Life Wardens of the rank of Range Officer at one per division with a complement of six guards. This set up was woefully inadequate but might have ensured a certain permanency as regards a fixed tour of duty. These posts were, however, soon downgraded for reasons which itself reflects the lack of appreciation of the subject, and as a result the Chief Wild Life Warden became the senior Divisional Forest Officer with his eye on an acting Conservatorship, and in the last four years they have five incumbents in this post. His subordinates also look to a speedy return to the parent department for promotion and all incentive is lacking. The game guards are temporary, matriculates, and have no future.

It may then be asked what is the scope and achievements of the Wild Life Department. The Forest Department feels that it is no longer responsible for the enforcement of game laws and, from Conservator downwards, regularly infringe them. Following suit are the magistracy, police and all the swelling tide of bureaucrats which go to make the present day administration. Needless to say the W.L. Dept. cannot function in the interests of their own terms of service. Prominent officials and non-officials not only break laws with impunity but in one case, to my knowledge, the Chief Warden's explanation was called for as to why a certain action had been taken against this very notorious person. The Wild Life Department is, therefore, only effective against small poachers and that only to a limited extent owing to their extremely restricted staff.

The main practical difficulty in having a separate Wild Life Department is Finance. To make it really effective would require a large staff, and it is not likely that Government which is always on the look out for extra funds would agree to expenditure on a non-revenue earning Department. There is, however, no reason why an effective organisation cannot be built into the present Forest Department. Before doing so, however, it is essential to considerably amplify the Game Preservation laws. These were promulgated in 1912 and, though admirable in many ways, are limited in their application as great changes have taken place since then and cultivation has spread to the forest fringe. Combined with the uninhibited issue of firearm licenses this has lead to large scale trafficking in meat and skins. The old saying of what comes out of the forest belongs to the forest does not apply, as animals live in crops and grass lands. Zemindari Forests have been taken over as scattered patches and distances as a consequence have increased greatly. The scope of crop protection is not understood by farmer or forester and is interpreted to justify sale of hides and meat with its concurrent evil of poaching.

I would, therefore, recommend that, within the Forest Department, a Conservator vacancy for the Chief Wild Life Warden should be created. The D.F.O. should be termed Divisional Forest Officer and Wild Life Warden with a suitable monetary allowance for his additional duties and responsibility. Under him would be an extra Assistant Conservator of Forests with a requisite subordinate staff. In addition to the paid forest staff, Honorary Wild Life Wardens should be appointed from among local non-officials on the recommendation of the D.F.O. to the District Wild Life Boards. Their appointment would not be mandatory, but would depend on suitable candidates. Needless to say their powers would be the same as the Wild Life Warden. A course of Wild Life Preservation should be included in the curriculums of all forestry colleges.

In conclusion I will once again state that the problem of saving our wild life is an urgent one as some species have vanished and others are on the verge of doing so. Persuasion and education are all very well, but are part of a long term policy, and the plain fact is that unless the administration takes a strong hand poaching will continue and wild life will vanish.

Arjan Singh.

India's National Parks and Sanctuaries

TAROBA NATIONAL PARK

(*Maharastra State Forest Department*)

The "TAROBA NATIONAL PARK", extending over approximately 45 sq. miles, is situated in the picturesque country well clothed with forests at a distance of 45 kilometers from Chanda town, which is a railway station on the Central Railways. This park made a very humble beginning as far back as 1905 when as a shooting block it was closed for shooting except for Carnivora, for which special permits were issued from time to time. Since 1931, shooting of all types of game including Carnivora was totally prohibited and the area was declared a Sanctuary in 1935. Subsequently along with the Kanha area of Mandla District it was declared a "National Park" by the former Madhya Pradesh Government in 1955.

The National Park area is situated in Moharli Range of West Chanda Division. The area is plain except for a few undulating hills. There is a beautiful lake known as "Taroba

Lake" situated in the midst of the park area. The water spread of this lake is about 3000 acres.

The Park contains two temples, one of "Taroba Deo" and another of "Maruti". Taroba Deo is worshipped by the local Adivasis. Though it is a deity of the "Gonds", the villagers of Chanda District and also those of adjoining districts worship this deity. Every Sunday, in the month of "Pausha" a fair is held at Taroba where hundreds of people gather and offer their prayers. The water from the Taroba lake is also taken by the people to sprinkle on their crops as there is a widespread belief that by the sprinkling of this water on the crops, crops remain protected from the attacks of insects and fungi.

The herds of cheetal, sambhar, blue-bull, bison, and bear are often seen in the late afternoon, evening and early morning round the lake. The animals may be seen in the grassy area along the nala, below the embankment through which pass the "Cheetal Road". The animals commonly met with in this National Park are as under :—

Common Name	Latin Name
Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i> .
Panther	<i>Panthera pardus</i>
Bison	<i>Bibos gaurus</i>
Sloth bear	<i>Melursus ursinus</i>
Hyaena	<i>Hyaena hyaena</i> .
Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>
Wild dog	<i>Cuon alpinus</i>
Blue-bull	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>
Sambhar	<i>Rusa unicolor</i>
Cheetal	<i>Axis axis</i>
Barking deer	<i>Muntiacus muntjack</i>
Four horned antelope	<i>Tetracerus quadricornis</i>
Chinkara	<i>Gazella bennettii</i>
Hare	<i>Lepus ruficaudatus</i>
Porcupines	<i>Hystrix leucura</i> .
Langur.	<i>Semnopithecus entellus</i>

Among the birds, duck and teal of several species are found in the cold weather in the tank together with some snipe (*Gallinago species*). Among the game birds, Pea-fowl (*Pavo istatus*) and the Grey jungle fowl are abundant, the jungle fowl preferring dense bamboo areas. These birds are most commonly seen during the early mornings and evenings just after sunrise and before sunset.

In the Taroba lake proper, there are crocodiles and different varieties of fish. During the winter months, the crocodiles can be seen on the banks of the lake sun-bathing.

The Park can be visited during the fair weather, i.e. from November to June. The best time for observing wild life clearly and fully in its natural habitat is from February till the onset of the monsoon, though the wild life can be observed during other seasons as well but with some difficulty and inconvenience. During the hot weather, all nallas dry up and the Taroba lake is the only source of drinking water for the wild animals. This provides unique opportunities for observing them in their natural state.

Inside the Park, there is a net-work of 88 km. of motorable fair-weather murrum roads. The one around the lake known as the "Circular Road" is 5 km. in length and completely circles the lake. It is one of the favourite roads of the visitors for observing wild life. The new "Cheetal road" which crosses many game tracks and grassy lawns has also become very popular because of the large herds of cheetal that can be seen along this road. Herds of bison are also seen grazing in the open grassy patches.

There are four Watch-towers (Machans) constructed along the edge of the Taroba lake at four vantage points where animals often come out for drinking water and for rest. Artificial Salt-licks have been created near the towers to attract wild animals which can be easily viewed from the towers for long periods to one's heart's content.

In order to afford additional protection to the wild animals of the Taroba National Park, a buffer zone of 22 sq. miles has been left round the Taroba National Park where shooting of wild life is totally prohibited. In order to regulate vehicular traffic and control poaching, two gates have been erected, one at Khatoda on the Chanda-Taroba road and another at the forest village of Ramdegi on Moharli-Khadsangi road. Visitors intending to visit the Park are not permitted to carry any fire-arms or ammunition in the Park and are required to deposit any fire-arms they may have with the Guards at these checking posts. Besides these measures, there is a jeep provided to check and detect poaching, if any, in and around the National Park. A Park Officer and a Park Guard are stationed at Taroba to look after the wild animals. They also guide and help the visitors in the Park.

There is a well-furnished Forest Rest House with two suites in the centre of the Park which commands a beautiful view of the exquisite lake, the grassy lawns and well-clothed hills. There is an inspection hut of two suites. On the small hillock adjoining the lake, a new Rest House has recently been constructed and it is proposed to furnish it suitably for the comfort of visitors. This is also being named the Centenary Rest House.

A caretaker-cum-cook is provided for the Forest Rest House at Taroba whose services are available for the visitors. However, rations and other provisions including milk, etc. are required to be brought by the visitors.

Outside the Park, there are two forest rest houses, partly furnished, one at Moharli and the other at Khadsingi villages, which are available for camping.

In order to popularise the Park, a scheme for the improvement of the Park was taken up and executed during the 2nd Five Year Plan period. Under this scheme, considerable improvements over existing roads in the Park were carried out. A circular road around the edge of the tank was completed. A Park Officer was appointed to assist the visitors, the conditions of the old Forest Rest House was improved and a Khansama was appointed. A shack consisting of two units was completed in order to cater for visitors of low income group and students who wish to stay over-night in the Park area. Even the convenience of the wild life was not overlooked. Nalas were bunded at suitable places in order to provide them with water. These bunds also permit the water holes to retain water for a longer period. Salt-licks were provided at a number of places. In 1959-60, a new headway was made for providing further amenities for visitors. Construction of a Rest House on a hillock which provides the best aesthetic approach to the Taroba lake and the Park was started. As has been mentioned before, this rest house is now ready. For the effective protection of the Park from poachers, two Nakas have been constructed at either end of the Park along the only approach roads at Khatoda and Ramdegi and gates have also been constructed and a jeep has been provided. This measure has been a great success as there is a noticeable increase in game inside the Park. The 2nd Five Year Plan involved a total expenditure of Rs. 1,56,973.50 for the maintenance and considerable improvement of the National Park, as mentioned above.

The State Government have a very ambitious scheme of introduction of an observation coach, on a Mercedes full-length truck chassis of 165' which is likely to cost Rs. 71,000.00. This 'Observation Car' will be luxuriously fitted with a raised deck to accommodate about 24 visitors and fitted up with a loud-speaker inside the car, which will be operated through a microphone and an amplifier system by the Park Officer, who will be seated by the side of the driver and will give running commentary of the flora and fauna, as they motor through the Sanctuary. It is expected that the 'Observation Car' will be ready next year. There is also a proposal to broaden and to asphalt the 28 miles approach road from Chanda at an estimated cost of Rs. 7.86 lacs. The tempo of improving the Park will be further accelerated during the 3rd Five Year Plan which involves an estimated outlay of Rs. 1,55,000.00.

It Happened in India

An optimistic but misguided and very uninfluential sportsman, wishing to secure a decent shooting block for the last half of December, wrote a letter to the Chief Wild Life Warden, U.P. Lucknow, enquiring, since it was not much use sending an application fee for blocks if already allocated, whether certain four blocks which he was thinking of applying for had been allotted already—though it was a good month before the time specified for the draw to be held—either to Senior Forest Officers, Shikar Companies, or V.I.Ps. He received no reply for more than a week, and accordingly sent a pre-paid wire asking for his letter to be answered. The reply came, 'letter not received repeat'. He did so. Another long wait. One day before the last day on which applications could be considered he received a reply that three of those blocks had been allotted before the so-called 'DRAW'. He might, said Lucknow, apply for Hathikund which had not been allotted.

He did so, enclosing application fee, begging that he should not be considered time-barred, as he had not, owing to Lucknow's failure to answer his letter, had time to apply in time. There was another long silence, and another pre-paid telegram, to which the answer came, 'Hathikund not allotted January'. As it was *December* he had applied for, this information was not much use; so he gave it up, having wasted a good deal of money on postage to no effect, not to mention the application fee, which also 'went down the drain'.

(*Editorial Comment.* This is a sufficient condemnation of the method of applying to Lucknow for blocks. Lucknow will get richer from application fees and the sportsman poorer. It is also a monumental example of bureaucratic inefficiency.)

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The Indian Board of Wild Life at its meeting in February 1958 recommended that a series of wild life stamps be brought out to assist in the campaign of saving India's wild life. Since then there has been, strangely enough, no appreciable progress in the implementation of the scheme. Although the Government of India has been bringing out a series of stamps commemorating famous incidents in Indian history and her famous sons, it has been unable to bring out a few stamps depicting some of India's famous wild animals and birds, some of which have vanished or are rapidly becoming extinct, within the long period of three years. Eloquent testimony, indeed, to the very low priority which India's wild life enjoys in the scheme of things!

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Deer are officially closed to shooting in a certain State in India, yet recently one of our members was regaled on Venison in the house of a friend, who said he got it in the company of the local forest officer! And last winter, in the same town, several deer were collected by another official who made a shooting trip to the forests of a neighbouring district in the course of his duties as a road engineer.

In the same State, foreign tourists who come to India for hunting trips at great expense, are denied the privilege of shooting deer, yet have to hear stories of poaching by locals and witness hunting of deer by local forest villagers in the very forests where they are camped. This is not the only case of indifference to an unsatisfactory state of affairs: in other parts of India, famous for tiger shooting camps to which rich Americans are brought in pursuit of tourism and the useful dollar, visitors have been moved to indignation at the widespread poaching to which the authorities appear to close their eyes while enforcing the rules for them and for the less opulent Indian resident sportsman.

In spite of careful protection the Assam Rhinoceros is still being poached for its horn. Some months ago poachers pitted a rhino in the Kaziranga Sanctuary, under the very noses of the game staff and killed it. After removing the horn they buried the carcass in the pit. This was but the culminating incident to persistent reports of illicit killing of rhino and touched off a vigorous enquiry, which has brought to light a ring of poachers. Several arrests have been made, including some businessmen who are suspected to be involved in the trade in rhino horns.

In the past two years nearly twenty rhinoceros have been found 'dead' in Assam, most of them in and around the Kaziranga Sanctuary. Several had obviously died of natural causes but in others the cause of death could not be established, nor were all the horns recovered. Question: For every dead rhino detected how many go undetected and at this rate of mortality is the Indian rhino, the main home of which is Assam, really safe from extermination?

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(Extract from Assam Tribune of 24 December, 1961)

Twelve persons arrested—sequel to murder during Rhino Poaching.

Shri Jitendranath Baruah, President of the Golaghat West Anchali Panchayat, has been arrested by the Police in connection with the murder of Shri Hem Mahanta of Tamulipathar under the Kaziranga manza within the Kaziranga Wild Life Sanctuary, while poaching Rhino in 1959. Eleven others have also been arrested in this connection.

Shri Baruah was an Honorary Forest Officer until July 1961, and was also President of the Yubak Congress. He has been released on bail.

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“And How They Do It Elsewhere”

Wild Life Stamps in America

In 1958 water fowl shooting season in Michigan, U.S.A. provided sport for 11,802 licensed hunters who fired 1,03,600 cartridges and bagged 1569 Canada geese, 103 mallard, and an unspecified number of twentythree other species of duck.

The significant fact is that 11% of the expenditure on cartridges went towards the management and improvement of wild life under the Pittman-Robertson Federal Aid to Wild Life Restoration. In addition, the enormous revenue derived from the sale of Wild Life Conservation Stamps issued annually since 1938 by the National Wild Life Federation for educational programmes and conservation projects, goes to assist American Wild Life.

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In a certain county of New York State a sportsman having killed a deer duly cleaned it out (removed the entrails) and left it to go and get help to carry the carcass home. Having failed to find anybody to help him he returned to the spot, to find the kill gone. Tracking in the snow he eventually came upon two men with the dead deer, which they claimed to have shot themselves and which they refused to give up.

In the ensuing law suit, the complainant enlisted the assistance of the Game Department who pointed out a rule under which, when a deer is shot, the killer has to tag it with a tag supplied with the license, a duplicate tag having to be submitted to the department as record of the kill. The officials gave evidence to the effect that neither of the defendants had submitted the required tag: and so the jury's verdict was that the deer had not been shot by either of them and they were convicted by the court for petty larceny.

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The twenty year old Earl of Shelburne, son of the Marquis of Lansdowne, Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs and a former page to Queen Elizabeth of England, recently faced in a Kenya court, nine charges of wounding wild buffaloes and not following them up. The Earl, who is employed by a local farmer, had been warned by the game authorities against trying to shoot buffalo when he did not know their ways and was described as 'young and inexperienced'.

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"WILD LIFE HOWLER"

(Copy from the Democratic Review dated 5.1.62, Shillong).

A Strange D.F.O.

A D.F.O. allegedly calls an "Elephant Tusk" an "Elephant Horn". He refers to the hazardous elephant shooting "A pleasurable sport". He declares that an elephant having 43 inches footprint is 9 feet long in height and adds further that the same animal has a trunk of 1 ft. 6 inches long only. An unheard of story according to a "Big Game Hunter".

**Speech delivered by the Honorary Secretary on November the 2nd, 1961
on behalf of the Wild Life Preservation Society of India, at the
Function arranged by the Wild Life Preservation Organisation U.P.,
on the occasion of Wild Life Week Celebrations.**

As you know Wild Life Week is being celebrated jointly by the Forest Department and the U.P. Wild Life Preservation Organisation, in cooperation with the Wild Life Preservation Society of India, which I represent as its Honorary Secretary, today.

Some of you must wonder why so much attention is being paid to the preservation of Wild Life, which surely could not be in such great danger of extermination as is made out; in fact the danger is even greater than the effort. Some species, have actually been wiped out, and no longer exist in India.

Man has always hunted and used the resources placed on this Globe by Nature; hence, as the population of man grows, the danger to Wild Life grows even faster.

The purpose of the Government and the Society I represent, is not to prohibit shooting and fishing completely, but to regulate it in such a way that, as the resources of wild life grow and form reserves, some of them are used for the good of man—shooting must be according to the rules made for the purpose of conserving Wild Life. While Sanctuaries and National Parks are needed in a modest way, they cannot be carried to such an excess that wild animals consume each other, die of disease and old age, and injure crops on the fringe of these Sanctuaries, to such an extent, that agriculturists are ruined, and give up these areas to revert to the jungle. At the same time animals, specially deer, go to cultivated areas to feed, where they are mercilessly destroyed by means which are inhumanly cruel. You will see from this how difficult the problem is. The only way is to allow

restricted shooting, by those who follow the rules and not by those who sit up on the fringe of the fields, water holes, salt licks, to shoot whatever comes out with low powered guns, or traps, for sale, and who will not spare a small growing fawn or female.

We advocate that the administration of Wild Life must be such, that if tigers and panthers are growing at such a rate that the deer tribe cannot survive, these tigers and panthers must be shot, to reduce their numbers, by permit holders and visitors to our country. When these panthers and tigers grow to the extent of doing tremendous damage, they become nothing short of vermin, and must be declared as such, which means that no hard and fast rules can be laid. If on the other hand deer and birds grow to reach the point where Nature's way of restoring normalcy, viz., disease is imminent, then it is better that some of these should be shot and used by man, which would save as many goats and sheep, which otherwise would have supplied the meat.

Wise utilization and not hoarding as done by misers who do not use their money even to pay the fees of a doctor when death is starting at the door, is the keynote.

If forests are well preserved and the balance of Nature kept normal by man, and not only by Nature, there can be no shortage, and the coming generations will have more wild life than our ancestors ever had, as is happening in America. Instead of localised Sanctuaries, such general Reserved Forests would help to propagate more wild life, because the law-abiding citizen who goes to shoot the quota allowed to him, cannot tolerate seeing the poacher, the enemy of wild life, killing to sell, and killing in every way possible without regard to the breeding season, the age or sex of his victim, or the rules. This law-abiding citizen is known as the sportsman, and he is the greatest help in the Wild Life Preservation efforts of a country and must be encouraged.

The Sanctuaries will always lack the third check and the poacher will not be accosted by such men; he (the poacher) will be able to share his meat without check with any corrupt guard, as can happen anywhere in any country. All our land and wild life must be considered with sanctity, and all our jungles must be one gigantic sanctuary, where instead of the primitive way of leaving everything to Nature, man steps in to plant and reap in such a way as to keep the balance in the best interest of the country. I would call this a Sanctity Reserve, or a gigantic developed production—WILD LIFE FARMS.

I hope you, as the guardians to the resources of our own dear country, which after decades of being under a foreign yoke, is now as free as any other nation, will come forward and make it a life's job to save our flora and fauna for the future generations and glory of India.

Gurkirat Singh Mann.

Bird Watcher's Corner

India is a newcomer to the systematic study of bird migration. Organised bird ringing and migration studies commenced only about two years ago, in the course of the study of the virus diseases and their transmitting agents, the arthropods (ticks and lice), found on birds. Under the leadership of Dr. Salim Ali and aided by grants from the World Health Organisation and in collaboration with the Virus Research Centre of Poona, four field seasons have been conducted in Kutch and Saurashtra, in which over 7500 birds, of which some 20% are migrant, were caught, ringed and released, after samples had been examined for tick infestation. The camps will continue to be held twice a year, in Mar.-April, and Sept.-Oct., the times of the spring and autumn migrations, and persons qualified and eager to participate in this work are invited to communicate with Dr. Salim Ali of the Bombay Natural History Society.

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How many persons who pride themselves on their knowledge of birds can claim to know the correct rules of nomenclature? For instance, is it correct to write Crow-Pheasant or Crow Pheasant, Bush Quail or Bush-quail, Jungle Fowl or Jungle-fowl? Moreover, how accurate are the Hindi or regional language names of Indian birds? An attempt is being made to standardise such names, and persons interested in birds are invited to send the names in use of the commoner birds of their region, both in Hindi and the regional language, after careful identification of the bird and verification of the name, to the Bombay Natural History Society.

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The importance of the role of birds in India's national economy has just been recognised by the appointment of a special sub-committee under the Indian Council of Agriculture Research to investigate the problem of damage to crops and orchards by pests other than birds and small mammals. Another project that has been approved by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research is the investigation of the "Role of Birds in the National Economy". This will include such items as the role of birds in the fertilisation of flowers and dissemination of seeds.

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The interest which the selection of a "National Bird" for India has aroused, is a symptom both of national consciousness in such matters and of interest in birds themselves. The

Indian Board of Wild Life had, in its meeting at Ootacamund in February, 1961, tentatively decided to select the Peacock as India's representative bird, but the selection has not met with complete approval. There are persons who assert that the choice should fall on a bird requiring protection, such as the Great Indian Bustard, while others argue that familiarity, beauty etc. should be the criteria. The debate goes on, and we invite our readers to give us their views.

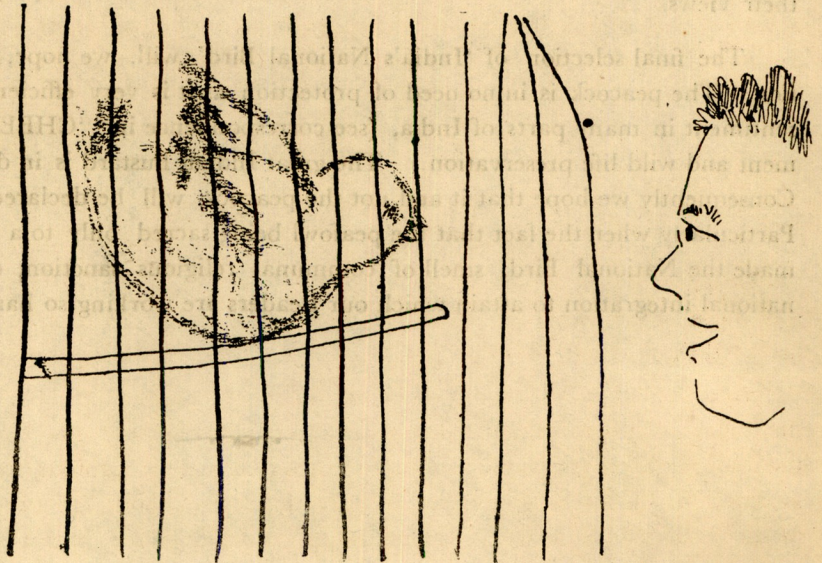
The final selection of 'India's National Bird' will, we hope, ensure it complete protection. The peacock is in no need of protection as it is very efficiently protected by religious sentiment in many parts of India, (see correspondence in "CHEETAL" on religious sentiment and wild life preservation.) The great Indian Bustard is in dire peril of extermination. Consequently we hope that it and not the peacock will be declared 'India's National Bird'. Particularly when the fact that the peafowl being sacred only to a certain community can, if made the National Bird, smell of communal religious sanction, destroying the essence of national integration to attain which our Leaders are working so hard.



Children's Corner

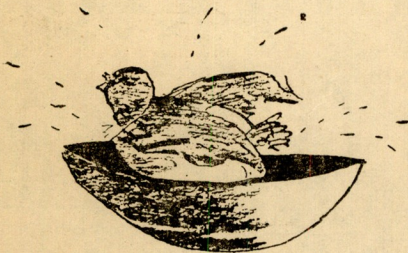
A WEE SPARROW CALLED PADDY

I remember, I remember—not the fifth of November, but some day in the year of 1954, when Balu my son, came home with a wee sparrow to keep as a pet. A cage was bought forthwith and Paddy as the children named her was installed in her new home. And Paddy lived with us seven long years, and we grew to love her and she us and so you see the arrangement was perfect, one of mutual love and affection. We had to cage her for we have a family of cats, and yet I feel that Paddy understood and never bore a grudge against us, and was happy in captivity.



She had her own little personality, her likes and dislikes, which she made apparent to us, and I who understood and loved her so much, oh so much, cherished her sentiments and her

little ways, and her habits. She enjoyed her baths of an afternoon in her shallow tub, but I was the one who would splash water on her and from that she would take her cue and bathe, splashing about, fluffing her feathers out and when she was well soaked, she would fly to her perch, shake her feathers, stretch her legs and allow the sun to soak into her being. It was all very fascinating to watch, and absorbed my interest for many minutes.



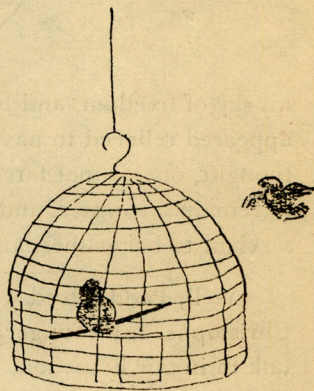
She had a partiality for certain types of food, and sathu, dal and rice, and milk and bread were her favourites, and I must confess I indulged her. When she would

get her bowl of fresh keoni (birdseed), she would be deliberately wilful, wasteful and naughty. In her little beak would go and she would scatter the seed with fiendish glee all over the cage and then would sit back and watch the effect with complacency as much as to say "see what I can do"! I took it upon myself to put her out in the sun every morning and remove her indoors when she had sunbathed, and so there existed between us a communication of souls or rather a soul unity, hard to define but nevertheless there. Often I was very mischievous, and when she was asleep with her little head tucked under her feathers I would playfully pull her tail, and she'd turn around and peck out and then seeing who it was she would understand that it was all a joke, and so she would ignore me and again get down to sleep.

And so life went on, day followed day and night followed night and the months drifted into the years, and time sped on oblivious of all. And often I would take Paddy out into the garden and give her, her freedom, but she would perch on my shoulder and prefer to stay there. She would investigate my head, and pluck at the strands of hair playfully. In her little head would go into the foliage of my hair, exploring the universe of my head.

And then there dawned a day when Paddy blossomed into a woman, no longer was she the "buccha" that was, and I knew the signs, I saw around my compound, of the birdlife, their songs of courtship, the music of nature that was so profound—the knowledge and the satisfaction. There was music in the air, birds flew about in pairs, a duet of wings, the medley was heady, intoxicating and it surged within my breast and filled me with a great peace and contentment. And so it came about, that there flew right out of the sky a Romeo, a handsome male sparrow, who found Paddy out and paid court to her. There he would perch above her cage, and sing lustily, songs of passion and love and marriage. And Paddy, coquettish as she was would reply in her sweet treble voice, trilling high and low, and flirting as only a female can! And I knew that on me depended her destiny. 'Why let her remain a spinster?' thought I, and so I entertained thoughts of love and marriage and had visions of little eggs and little sparrow-bucchās, and what not. And I decided on a plan, and this is what I did.

I put Paddy's cage into my bedroom, shutting all the windows but one. And withdrawing to a discreet distance I watched the course of events. And the male was not to be thwarted, and being true in his love he was determined to gain his objective, and naturally flew into Paddy where she was. And like lightning I shut the window, scattered seed on the floor, and sat back watching with interest the one I loved. I let Paddy out of



her cage and she flew about the room with easy abandon, each bird keeping to himself, and never even by mistake did they get together in a companionable way. And my impatience grew, and I waited and waited, a catching and waiting game, no bird took the initiative of approach and I knew now that they depended on me, even though, mark you, I am no bird! I rose from my corner and opened the cage-door and in flew Paddy and in flew her lover and with lightning speed I shut the door and there were the two, the beloved and the loved in the cage.

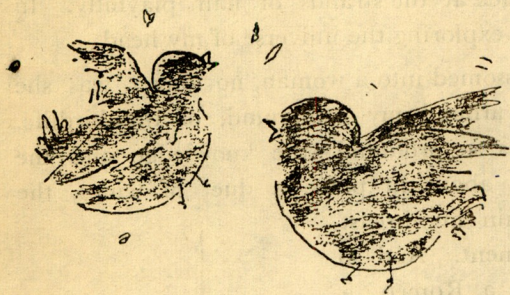
The male ignored Paddy where she sat on her perch, preening herself, to look pretty for him, fluffing out her feathers and baring her dainty legs. All the wiles of a woman were being wantonly displayed so openly that it caused me embarrassment, and believe me, I am no prude! And like all men, the male sought only fulfilment of the stomach—for he greedily descended to Paddy's bowl of food, and with the appetite of a gourmand he devoured the grain. So food is the main consideration thought I, disappointed in the course of events,

when with an angry cry filled with temper, Paddy swooped down on him, mercilessly pecking into his feathers. There were any amount of feathers and fluff flying, I can assure you, and I could see that the male was getting the worst of the bargain, for Paddy was relentless and like any woman once fixed on something she refused to give way. And so I had no other alternative but to release the male to

his sky of freedom, and he flew away with not even a backward glance! As for Paddy she appeared relieved to have the cage to herself and to be the sole occupant of it. And so I thought, one cannot force one's views on another, even if it be a bird! Possibly she wants to remain a spinster, and who was I to voice my opinions? I was just her owner, one subservient to her wishes, and I respected them.

Well, Paddy lived with us seven long years, giving us her birdlike friendship, talking to Christopher my younger son and Sibna our bearer, the only two people she singled out to talk to in our household. And talk she did, if you know what I mean, a jabbering which nobody understood, but which held a wealth of meaning for Paddy I am sure.

And it was only in November this year that our little Paddy met her tragic end. I was away in Calcutta and the first words my son Bulu greeted me on my arrival home were "Mummy the cats have killed Paddy". And my heart sank and a blankness filled my being and my eyes misted up with tears that spilled themselves down my cheeks. As I mourned



for my little winged friend who had been my good companion for seven short years of my life, her tragic death churned my tummy and I was filled with a hurt that time alone could efface. And so you see often lives that have a beautiful beginning, have a tragic end, but then it was a life of seven years lived to the full, packed with beauty and love, and incidents, heavy, like a fruit-cake, with so many rich ingredients. Yes, a rich life, full and meaning, lived with a little sparrow who taught me so much, and who really had no pain, for death came swiftly and softly, life one second, and death another, and the little feathers, scattered on the ground, blown about by the wind, sing a song of love and life and joy. And I mourned my feathered-friend, and often without thinking when I am in the verandah I stretch out my fingers to pull her tail, only to get the renewed shock that she is no longer there for me to tease. My wee one has gone to the happy hunting grounds, the years I spent in her company have been happy ones, I visualise it all and even though I have no photograph of her, in the family album, I have a picture of her in my mind, that time can never erase, for I have the privilege of keeping it always with me—it's mine for keeps.



And now before I conclude this chapter on the life of our little winged friend, I would very much like to introduce you to my son Bulu who is a poet and a painter, and so to him I leave the "poem" on Paddy and the illustrations, without which this story will be incomplete. His contributions make it possible for me to write for I know that he who knows me so intimately can also feel what I can, and so there is a sincerity in his drawings, which bring one a visual picture of all that I have written. And so my little friends I bid you all an au-revoir, till the next edition of course!

(Mrs.) Yvonne Imam.

TO PADDY, OUR SPARROW.

Though you were a little dead
 Sparrow I lov'd you so much,
 Paddy gone now
 Paddy gone now
 Paddy gone from his little cage
 Paddy gone now
 Paddy gone now
 Yet we keep love'you still
 And remember
 Oh yet remember
 Our little Paddy still !

I LIVED AMONGST TIGERS

By J.E. CARRINGTON TURNER—Indian Forest Service (Retired)

Author of "*Man-Eaters and Memories*".

"As cruel as a tiger!"

Have you ever used this expression? If you have, pray don't ever do so again. It is ill-coined and untrue.

Tigers are a subject about which many people know very little. I, therefore, welcome this opportunity to tell you about them in the hope that I may be able to remove any wrong ideas you may possibly have formed about these magnificent denizens of the Indian jungles.

To begin with, let us be quite fair and separate tigers into two kinds; there is the *normal* tiger.....I do want that adjective emphasized.....and then there is the other, very different and dreaded kind, wherever he happens to operate, the man-eater.

Keep the two kinds firmly apart in your mind because their ways of life differ so very much.

The normal tiger

I will tell you about him first since his numbers are far greater and he is so little understood and so badly misjudged.

Let me assure you that he does *not* seek out, kill and devour human beings. Very definitely, he is not the savage, diabolical animal people think he is.

Nature, ever bountiful, had provided him with what is, perhaps, a superior diet in the form of all species of deer, antelopes and wild pig. These he stalks, seizes and lives on in his natural home, the forest.

And I do most earnestly ask you to remember this often-forgotten fact: *the normal tiger does not molest man unless man molests him*. If you will bear this in mind you will be doing him plain justice. Indeed, on his behalf, I ask for no more.

There are, however, certain readily understandable circumstances when the normal tiger shows extreme displeasure at man's intrusion. I will tell you what these circumstances are.

The tigress with cubs.

With her strong maternal instinct she will attack on sight or sound and strike, seize and kill an intruder in order to protect her precious offspring.

During my inspections, whether I was on foot or mounted on an elephant, whenever I came to a patch of grass large, dense and tall enough to harbour such a tigress, I would halt and consider the situation as cautiously as I could by observing certain signs such as footprints and excreta. Tigers don't cover up their excreta as leopards do.

Next, I would sniff the air and wiggle my nose. If I got the slightest whiff of tiger-odour..... that kind of smell you experience when you stand in front of the tiger's cage in a zooI made a discreet detour, wide enough to avoid what would most certainly have been an extremely unpleasant meeting. A keen nose is a great boon in Tigerland !

It will doubtless interest you to know that all tigresses with cubs are given the fullest protection under the shooting rules in India. Hunters with permits are warned very clearly before entering their territories not to fire at them.

Mating tigers.

Mating time is another occasion when it is wise not to go too close to a normal tiger. Both he and she object strongly to the slightest intrusion on their privacy. Whenever I was about to enter a thicket of young coppice and I heard a deep growl, I would take the audible and considerate hint immediately and change direction.

For such kindly warnings I was profoundly grateful. They seemed to say so emphatically: "Go away, we wish to be by ourselves".

The tiger has a right to retaliate.

When man molests a normal tiger and the shot fired does not kill instantly, then the fun and game begin in deadly earnest. The tiger retaliates with a vengeance which has to be seen to be believed.

If he kills his assailant it is just too bad. Let us never forget that the right to retaliate is not, and never was, a monopoly enjoyed by the human race.

The grievously wounded and suffering tiger, straddling the lifeless body of the luckless hunter, is surely justified in saying: "I did you no harm, nor did I ever intend to, but you deliberately came, sought me out and did your best to kill me. I have taken my revenge and paid you back in your own coin".

Many tragedies of this description have occurred from time to time, especially when over-enthusiastic novices went tiger-hunting alone and inadequately armed.

Tell me dear reader, in all seriousness, would you describe such a retaliating tiger as *cruel*? There can be but one answer, precise and emphatic.

The tiger is very far from being a coward. On the contrary, he is born supremely brave, a bravery unsurpassed, which endures undiminished to the last beat of his stout heart.

How peculiarly apt, and so richly deserved, would this expression be: "As brave as a tiger."

The man-eater.

We will now consider the other kind of tiger, the man-eater. Unfortunately, there is much ignorance about him. I will try and remove this ignorance by coming straight to the point:

Why does he kill and eat human beings?

The answer is: Because he is hungry, desperately hungry, and faced with death by starvation.

There is really no other answer.

You might well ask me: "But why does he suffer from hunger?"

Briefly, I will give you some of the reasons:

Firstly, terrible, impelling starvation is brought about when he, as a normal tiger, wanders into a tract devoid of his natural prey which has been wiped out by thoughtless hunters

Secondly, a nasty wound by a badly aimed bullet may so disable him that he no longer can seize deer and antelopes because these have become too swift for him.

Thirdly, old age brings about increasing disability. His former agility has gone, he has lost many teeth and some claws may be missing.

Hunger sets in and gnaws more, driving him, in any of the above circumstances, to search for the easiest of all preys, men and women going about their daily chores near the villages. Their utter defencelessness and comparatively slow movements make them just the prey he wants.

If we could only ask him: "Why have you turned man-eater?"

His reply, quite a convincing one, would undoubtedly be: "I have a right to live and I will do all I can to live".

Appreciating his unfortunate circumstances who, amongst us, can deny him such a right ?

In his desperation it is not difficult to imagine the working of his frantic mind. So you see that, in spite of his new and anti-human mode of life, he does deserve a generous measure of our sympathy and understanding both of which must, perforce, be blotted out from the mind momentarily when the time comes to seek him out and destroy him in order to avoid further loss of human life.

I propose now telling you about one or two of my own experiences with normal tigers.

A shocking crime.

Her home was in the Motichur forest, seven miles from the pilgrim-crowded city of Hardwar on the sacred, snow-fed Ganges river.

When during my inspections, I happened to see her I would silently exclaim in sheer admiration: "What a beautiful creature you are!"

She was indeed an exceedingly lovely tigress. Her coat was a rich orange colour; and with her black, wonderfully-patterned stripes beginning from the corner of her eye and continuing in all their ordered variety to the very tip of her tail, she was regal to behold. With head uplifted she stood as an empress in that sylvan setting.

With perfect grace she accepted the scores of grass-cutters in their scattered camps. She saw them daily making their tiny stacks. They were here, there and everywhere. Not a man did she ever attempt to attack. She passed them and went on her rounds in search of an unsuspecting deer or slumbering pig.

This serenely peaceful and happy scene marked each day year after year.

Alas! On a pitch black night in February the grimmest of tragedies befell. A notorious poacher, driving through the forest, saw her crossing the road. The headlights of his car shone brightly on her and dazzled her as she stood blinking at them.

His cowardly, cursed bullet struck.

Away she bounded in her agony, to be found dead a few days later by a grass-cutter. Her wound was gaping, maggot-infested.

My staff and I determined at all costs to track down the poacher. Not a moment did I lose in confiscating his three guns. His licence was cancelled for life.

Remembrance often brings sadness and so it does to me as I repeat to myself: "No punishment could ever fit that crime".

He walked beside me.

I could not have chosen a better caption for the story I am about to relate. It is, as you will see, literally true.

To my mind, at any rate, there is not the slightest doubt that the most delightful of all places are the vast, indescribably enchanting forests of India.

And when you spend the greater, certainly the happiest, part of your life in that faunal and floral paradise you are not by any means surprised when your companion whispers: "There is a tiger on your right".

Turning slightly, I saw Stripes. I had been doing the talking, my friend the listening. The hands of my watch pointed to some minutes after five o'clock. We were returning to our camp for tea after spending the day inspecting tree marking.

On both sides of the road the forest spread out for miles and miles, giving us a feeling of infinite space and infinite freedom of movement.

There was Stripes striding seriously and ever so softly on the carpet of fallen, decaying leaves. Not more than twelve yards from me his supple, tawny coloured body stepped now into the deepening shadows, now into the shafts of sunlight falling through the leafy canopy.

Thus he continued to walk beside me for quite thirty yards, for I was nearer than my companion.

We were of no interest to him, not even of the slightest dietary consequence !

He was now assuming a semi-crouching attitude. That told me he had a definite target. Looking ahead I saw a herd of deer. His plan was now clear.

Closer and closer to them he approached. We had stopped to see what would happen. He was stalking in his most skilful manner. But the deer, ever vigilant, saw him in the nick of time and vanished in a split second.

Disappointed, he stood gazing in their direction and then strolled away deeper into the forest.

We felt sorry he had missed a meal that would have satisfied his hunger for at least a week. His company, of brief duration, had been far from unpleasant.

A casual meeting.

It was just that kind, so illustrative of the ways of the normal tiger.

My staff and equipage had gone ahead to the next camp but I was delayed by sudden arrival of a deputation of timber contractors eager to air their grievances, in their usual garrulous manner, about an officer's severity in applying rules governing the inspection of railway sleepers.

Having poured more than an ordinary quantity of oil on what were very turbulent waters, I started out along a straight road with tall trees on both sides making one of Nature's imposing avenues.

I had walked about three miles when I observed a dim, motionless object in the middle of the track. It was too far for me to make out what it was.

Objects of all descriptions on roads in the forests were common sights. So on I trekked looking at the many species of birds chattering and flitting, chasing one another and catching insects on the wing. Amongst them the drongo was conspicuous by his black colour and forked tail.

As the intervening distance lessened the object began to take a shape that was particularly interesting. When I approached nearer I found myself staring at a tiger sitting on his haunches, looking all around him, his great, green eyes taking me in as he turned his head to the left.

He was a really big tiger, in the prime of life, quite ten and a half feet from his nose to the tip of his tail.

The studied scrutiny of his surroundings left me in no doubt that he was hunting, adopting the clever method of remaining perfectly still. It was up to me to do nothing to mar his prospects. So I stood motionless, a little more than twenty yards from him as an interested spectator.

Those keen eyes penetrated every square yard of the bush-covered area in front of him. The small patches of grass made it a favourite haunt of deer and none knew it better than he.

Those little ears, with their amazing receptiveness, were cocked backwards at intervals of seconds to catch the slightest sound in his rear.

You would gasp with astonishment if you tested that receptiveness as I have done !

So he continued to sit. Whenever he turned towards me his look, though appearing ever so casual, was very meaningful and I read it to say: "You don't interest me at all, but let there be no nonsense, behave yourself and all will be well between us".

A little later he decided he had remained long enough in that spot. Rising on all fours, straightening himself, he stood for a few seconds and then stepped leisurely into the bushes and grass, immediately displaying to perfection Nature's scheme of camouflage.

But while he stood and then moved away, his massive yet graceful form, that broad head with its impressive ruff, those limbs the very embodiment of matchless might, his inherited character, gentlemanly in the highest degree, all fittingly crowned by that kingly gait, portrayed a picture so utterly fascinating that it remains today one of many treasured memories.

An Open Letter to Dr. Gardiner Bump.

(Officer in charge of the export of live game birds and fertile eggs from India to America.)

January 19th/1962.

Dear Dr. Gardiner Bump,

A year or two ago we had the pleasure of first corresponding with you, and then of meeting you personally at an Annual General Meeting of this Society. You were then interested in finding out from stomach contents the kind of food a jungle-fowl or a partridge would need if it were established in America, which was the object in view. We welcomed the idea and stomach contents were duly sent to you, at considerable expense of time and labour. We hoped that the scientific methods of Wild Life Conservation in America would ensure the survival of the species in America, even if they became extinct in India, where conservatory methods are not nearly so efficient, or so well understood. It was even a possibility that after America had firmly established the species, it would be possible to re-import them from America to India.

Since then we were made aware of the fact that live birds and fertile eggs were actually being exported from India. We wished then that we had never encouraged the idea. Though we feel sure that your requirements from each Forest Division were modest, and would have made no serious inroad in the number of game birds available, the results have

been disastrous. Last year in the one month the writer was able to secure a small game shooting permit for the Saharanpur Division of the U.P., he saw more birds and shot more in the three or four days available than ever before since 1940. This year, in spite of drastic restrictions which have halved the amount of shooting possible, so far the number of birds seen has been less than a quarter of those seen the previous year. The Divisional Forest Officer of the Saharanpur Division, confirmed this. When I asked him the reason, he put the blame on you. When I asked who collected the eggs and the live birds for Dr. Gardiner Bump, he replied, 'Village poachers' ! Armed with a formidable document from the Foreign Department of The Government of India, entitling them to collect eggs and live birds from the Saharanpur Division, for Dr. Gardiner Bump, they do so with a vengeance. Dr. Gardiner Bump may make a request for a hundred eggs and a hundred live birds from the Saharanpur Division, which would not make a great inroad on the jungle-fowl population. But the village collectors, knowing that there can be no check on numbers, will collect a thousand eggs and a thousand birds, and profit considerably.

Our forests cannot stand this expenditure of jungle-fowl and partridges. India may want dollars, but this is too heavy a price to pay. For this amounts at present to giving the green light to every poacher in the neighbourhood. Keen sportsmen are naturally interested in there being something left to shoot, and they are your best conservators.

May we beg you, in the interest of Wild Life Conservation in India to lay off this collection of eggs and live birds, unless they are collected under the personal supervision of American citizens.

Yours sincerely,
Members of the Wild Life Preservation Society of India.

[A copy of this 'Open Letter' was posted to Dr. Gardiner Bump sometime before we went to press in the hopes of a reply before the April CHEETAL was published. He has very kindly replied in terms that, while not going into detail, give us an opportunity for thrashing out this mysterious problem at an Annual General Meeting, which we hope that Dr. Gardiner Bump will be able to attend.]

Dear Secretary Mann:

Your most considerate letter of January nineteenth has been read with a keen appreciation of the interest in Wildlife Conservation as expressed by certain members of the Wild Life Preservation Society of India. I am entirely in agreement with the thought expressed therein, that practices detrimental to wildlife should be discouraged. As a member of the Society, I certainly will lend my active support to see that this is done. In furtherance of this, I request that the situation, detailed in your letter, be included for discussion in the agenda of the

forthcoming annual meeting of the Society. At that time, my assistant, who made the actual collection of junglefowl, and I will be present to discuss to what extent our Programme might be responsible for any apparent scarcity of junglefowl in the Saharanpur Division.

You will agree that it will be extremely informative for the Society members to review our Programme to date and to judge for themselves as to the effects thereof on the basis of the facts which we are prepared to present. I hope that you will request the Divisional Forest Officer of the Saharanpur Division to be present, also, and prepared to substantiate his statement to you that the Programme is responsible for a shortage of jungle fowl in his Division this year.

The suggestion made in the last paragraph of your letter is a wise one, so much to the point, in fact, that we adopted it when the Programme was initiated and have followed it in all our work to date, so far as I know.

Thank you for bringing this situation to my attention. It would be appreciated if you will confirm the placing of this item on the agenda and advise me as to the date and place of the annual meeting.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Gardiner Bump,

Research Biologist.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I have just received my copy of the 'Cheetal' and have read your article on fly-fishing and spinning. I imagine you will have quite a response from the fishing members of our Society, and I presume the spinners will have a vast majority! So let me now add my voice (in vain I suppose) to the almost lost cause of fly-fishing.

The war between fly fishermen and spinners, is an old one, both abroad and in India, though in India it's hardly a war at all because it is all too obvious that genuine fly-fishing hardly exists.

Fishing is comparatively young in India, at least on the present day lines, and I believe that this is one of the main reasons why the fly-rod and reel have been left on the shelf of

obscurity. Fly-fishing is more than just another way to take fish; at least I have always believed that to the ardent, genuine, fly man it was more like "a way of life." It requires patience, skill and above all experience, which one keeps adding to through the years, and eventually is passed down from generation to generation.

Spinning requires nothing like this. Anyone who is initially keen enough can make a fairly good spinner in a few hours on the river. Please don't for a moment imagine that I'm slinging mud at the spinners, because I stand very firmly in their ranks too, but the fact remains that spinning and fly-fishing are worlds apart. Spinning for Mahseer in a well stocked stream, gives the angler king-sized thrills, it's true, but is as different from casting for trout as sitting up for a leopard is from shooting duck in a freezing jheel !

My first rod was a fly rod cut down to suit my size at eleven years of age, though I must admit I was better with a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch fly-spoon than a regular fly. Perhaps it is because of this "early way of life" that I am biased in favour of the authentic fly rod and reel, but it also gives me cause to understand why those who take up angling later in life take to spinning; people like them are to be pitied !

Sincerely,
David Mainwaring.

[We are grateful for this contribution to a cause which we do not believe to be yet entirely a lost one, but we must say that we do not quite agree with our correspondent's assessment of 'spinning' as being an inferior art to 'fly-fishing'. We find them both equally artistic and sometimes equally difficult. Spinning is not just a question of 'in goes the spoon, and out comes the fish'. Our argument was that in certain trout waters spinning was unfair, not merely to the trout, but to fellow anglers.

—Editor.]

Sir,

One gathers from reading Skene Dhu's classic "The Angler in Northern India" that, in days gone by, the Kosi river in the Kumaon district provided excellent mahseer fishing. Today, unfortunately, this can no longer be said to be true. I attribute this very largely to two causes: the intensive dynamiting and the indiscriminate netting that, to my personal knowledge anyway, has been going on for the past 5 or 6 years.

The Kumaon Kosi rises in the hills above Almora and though actually a tributary of the Ganges, its waters are virtually drained by the innumerable canals which take off from it when it emerges from the hills below Ramnagar. Thus, in so far as its piscatorial population is concerned, the river is self-contained and cannot rely on an annual replenishment from below.

That the Kosi contained big fish in the past cannot be denied. Even as recently as 1957, a 40 pound mahseer was hooked and successfully landed in the upper Kosi by Dr. Mondino from Nainital. An account of this exploit is given in the "Statesman" of, I think, 27 July 1957. A number of other fair-sized fish ranging between 15 to 20 pounds were also caught by anglers that year. Today, a 5 pounder may be considered to be a good catch in the upper Kosi.

I have been visiting the Kosi during the months of May/June/July regularly since 1957. In 1957, the motor-road from Khairna to Almora was under construction. The first 14 miles of this alignment runs upstream from Khairna along the left bank of the river. Dynamiting of the larger pools along this upper stretch of the Kosi by the road-construction gangs became a regular feature. Once the road was through, the "repair maintenance" parties took over. Fortunately, their depredations are not so great, presumably because the nature of their work denies them the same allocation of dynamite as was available to their predecessors! However, the construction of another road, running downstream along the lower Kosi, from Khairna to Ramnagar has recently commenced. This alignment is to follow the river for much of its length. I have both heard and seen the dynamite squads at work. If left unchecked, they will eventually decimate the big fish in the lower Kosi as well.

Hand-netting, by the local villagers when the river is low, has now become a regular feature throughout its length. Being confined to the runs and shallower pools, the netters do not of course cause as much devastation as do the dynamite squads. But between these two types of depredators, the river is being covered pretty thoroughly and very little is left over for the legitimate anglers.

Unless some drastic preventive action can be initiated soon to put a stop to these twin evils, not only will the adjective "mighty" no longer be applicable to the mahseer in the Kumaon Kosi but this gallant fish may, I very much fear, be wiped out altogether in this truly delightful river.

Yours faithfully,
H. Chukerbati (Brig.)

[We are grateful to this contribution to our appeal for action from a well known sportsman. Actually the contributor, from his Official position, can do far more than we who are no more than a 'pelican crying in the wilderness', with no power at all. Were we in control of the Government of India, we could save India's Wild Life within ten days. But we are not. —Editor.]

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Dear Sir,

I send you herewith an extract from a letter written to me by a Lady in the U.K., the daughter of a former officer in the Indian Forest service of the United Provinces, which I am sure will be of interest to your readers. The interest in India's wild life which she displays is certainly to be admired. I am confident that if an approach were made to the many forest officers and others who served in India they would become members of the Wild Life Preservation Society of India, so assisting in the worthwhile task of saving the wild life of the country from indiscriminate destruction.

Shillong.

3-8-61.

Yours etc,
P.D. Stracey.

"I already belong to five natural history or preservation societies but will certainly join yours too.

Lately, within one week, I had two horrifying accounts of the disappearance of wild life in India everywhere. One was an article in the Illustrated Weekly of India and the other was a letter from an Indian retired from the forest service, who was there at the same time as my father and he wrote: "During only the last ten years all is eaten up!" I wrote at once to our Fauna Preservation Society of which I am a member and they reply that they are already doing all they can through Mr. E.P. Gee and the Bombay Natural History Society. I wrote also direct to Prime Minister Nehru, who replied at once that he agreed with all I said and telling me they already have a Wild Life Board.

It is only by prompt and effective action now that the most wonderful wild life in the world can be saved for the future. Upon it depends the tourist trade to a large extent, as well as food, sport (mostly with camera I hope) and national pride."

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A Frantic Need in India

Dear Sir,

There is, beyond all doubt, a frantic need for the preservation of animals on this earth and particularly in India. As civilization crowds nature more and more, the numbers of animals diminish at an amazing rate. As man is the cause of this concerning fact, it is obviously his duty to stop this decrease and maintain a good balance in Nature.

As an example, I have chosen to quote from John James Audubon—the great American naturalist—in an article written about Passenger Pigeons in the United States in 1820 on the Mississippi River:

"The multitudes of Wild Pigeons in our woods is astonishing. The air was literally filled with pigeons during migration; the light of noonday was obscured as by an eclipse; dung fell as rain or snow. For ever three hours, an uninterrupted column of pigeons flew over us. If they went at sixty miles an hour, the area would be 180 miles long and a mile wide. Allowing two pigeons to a square yard, we have 1,115,136,000 pigeons pass over us in one of the many flights."

Today, *not a single* Passenger Pigeon exists in the world, because no one thought that they needed to be conserved because of their huge numbers. There are many other similar tragic examples.

In order to stop these shocking things from happening in India, a nation-wide movement in co-operation with the Government and other private agencies is absolutely essential. The fact that some animals are too numerous while other animals are fighting for survival and are simultaneously being persecuted should not exist. This does not mean a sharp revision of game laws, but instead, an enforcement of the rules and regulations that already exist. For this, wide publicity and co-operation are necessary.

One of the most seemingly insoluble problems is, as we all know, that of poaching. Even in Society waters, I have observed poachers seining many fish from the rivers, while they are out of the warden's reach. It is absolutely essential to India's welfare and future that this be stopped, and we must stop it right now through a united effort. Therefore, I appeal to everyone who is interested in India's progress to do their utmost to preserve wild life.

William Riddle,
Woodstock, Mussoorie.

* * * * *

Dear Sir,

We were shocked and grieved to read your editorial article regarding Shikar Companies, in your Journal "CHEETAL" of April and October 1961. It is extremely surprising that such ill informed and baseless articles should be allowed to appear in the Journal of a Society that is working so hard for game preservation in India. Regarding this matter, we beg to bring the following facts to your notice, concerning the points mentioned in the above mentioned articles:

1. Why should Shikar Companies be given preference in reservation of Blocks

The blocks reserved for Shikar Companies are exclusively for the use of foreign tourists. The Shikar Companies attract foreign tourists by publicity etc., in foreign countries. The

tourists bring much needed Dollars to India. There can be no argument about the fact that India does need Dollars. Preference in reservation of blocks is only one of the minor facilities allowed to foreign tourists by our Government. Tourists are even exempted from certain sections of The Arms Act to facilitate them to bring Arms and Ammunition into the country. Foreigners holding tourist introduction cards are given all possible facilities in their travel and stay at hotels. Formalities at Customs at ports of entry, have also been specially cut down to the minimum possible for the convenience of tourists. The Government of India have set up a special Tourist Department, which has offices all over the world in all major cities. These tourist offices are costing the Government a tremendous amount to upkeep and run, but these offices are helping to attract foreign tourists who bring into the country the much needed Dollars. It is a very common sight to see in Delhi and other major towns of India, and even in some remote forest rest houses—big posters with a picture of Prime Minister Pt. Nehru, exhorting the Indian public to treat the foreign tourist as an honoured guest and as a friend. Surely an honoured guest and a friend is at least entitled to have special blocks reserved for his shikar? If your Editor objects to even this minor facility of block reservations, then he may as well ask the Government to close down all their foreign tourist offices, and cancel all facilities at Customs etc., that are allowed to tourists. As long as India needs Dollars, and as long as the Indian Government wants to attract foreign tourists to the country, then all possible facilities will have to be given, including reservation of special blocks for shikar for tourists.

2. How does the country gain, if Shikar Companies get the Dollars

We can prove from our record and this fact can also be verified from the tourist Department, Government of India, that an American tourist usually spends about three times as much on his travel, sightseeing, hotel accommodation and purchase of gifts and souvenirs etc., as he does on his Shikar trip. So for every dollar that goes into the pocket of a Shikar Company, atleast three Dollars go into the pockets of other Indians. But the main fact that your Editor seems to overlook, is that, no matter whose pocket the Dollar goes into, that Dollar comes into the country alright, and it is definitely the country's gain. If your Editor objects to Shikar Companies making Dollars, he may as well object to the Dollars being made by Travel Agents who make travel arrangements for tourists; to hotels who put up these tourists; to shops that sell souvenirs etc. to tourists; and to a host of other people who directly or indirectly make Dollars from tourists. Surely, it is an obvious fact that no matter who makes the Dollars, as long as the Dollars come into the country, it is the country's gain. It has to be some individual or firm that makes Dollars, since the Government cannot possibly do everything that would make the Dollars go directly to the Govt., instead of being earned for the country by some individual or firm.

3. Poaching by Shikar Companies and Individual Sportsmen.

Your Editorial suggests that Shikar Companies are the biggest potential poachers and law breakers, whereas in actual fact, it is just the opposite. This can be proved easily by looking up the records of the Forest Department, of any one shooting season. The reasoning put forward by your Editorial, is that because Shikar Companies make a lot of money, they are in a position to hand round fat bribes to local forest staff. Even if it is taken for granted that Shikar Companies would indulge in this sort of thing, why must it be taken for granted that the forest staff would take bribes? Giving and taking of bribes are both legal offences. Why must such baseless allegations be made and aspersions cast on Shikar Companies and forest staff, without even bothering to look up the records or dig up some definite cases? The following facts also speak for themselves:

(a) Shikar Companies are officially recognized by the Govt. After every Shikar, the Companies have to submit to the Tourist Dept., Govt. of India, a detailed report not only of the Shikar, but also of the amount charged from each tourist. The home address of the tourist is also submitted, and in each case, the Tourist Dept., writes a letter direct to the tourist's home address asking for confidential remarks as to how his Shikar was run and how he was treated by the Shikar Company concerned.

(b) In every Shikar Camp of Companies operating atleast in Uttar Pradesh, a game guard is always present, and the camp is regularly visited by the Asstt. Game Warden, and at times also by the Game Warden of that area. Under the circumstances, your Editorial would seem to suggest that the entire Game Warden Department is corrupt, and would accept bribes from Shikar Companies??

(c) All better known Shikar Companies have to run atleast half a dozen Shikar camps each season. If they indulged in bribery and corruption, they could not possibly hope to get away with it so many times, specially with all the strict supervision. But it is quite the opposite with local or individual sportsmen. As also admitted by your Editor, these days no individual sportsman has either the time or the resources to indulge in at the most two Shikars per season, in fact it can safely be said that 99% of these sportsmen go in for only one shikar per season. Very little, if anything at all, can be done against these sportsmen if they break forest rules etc., at the most their names can be black-listed and permits not given to them for a specified time. This can and is usually overcome by getting permits in the name of a relative or a friend. Whereas in the case of a Shikar Company, there is no question of black-listing, their recognition can be straightaway cancelled, and the very existence of the Company comes to an end.

(d) Looking at it from a commonsense point of view, it cannot be denied that no individual sportsman can possibly have the interest of game preservation so much at heart, as a Shikar Company should. After all, Shikar to an individual sportsman is a recreation, a fine hobby and a pleasant pastime—but he can, if pressed for time and convenience, certainly do without it. But to a Shikar Company, it means their daily bread and butter and a means of survival. The business of the Company and the continuance of this business depends entirely and wholly on better game preservation. If all the game is shot out, the Shikar Companies will automatically go out of existence, whereas to an individual sportsman, it will only mean the end of a hobby and nothing more.

4. Specific case of violation of rules by a certain Shikar Company

Your Editorial mentions the case of the American writer-hunter Jack Denton Scott, who as a guest of the Govt. of India hunted with a Shikar Company in Central India, and wrote a book about his experience of night hunting and shooting by artificial light. Instead of taking any concrete steps, or doing anything about it, your Editor has just mentioned this to prove his point in condemning all Shikar Companies in general, by suggesting that this sort of thing is commonly done by all Companies. Instead of writing such articles, the cause of game preservation would be better served if such obvious breach of rules is brought to the notice of the authorities concerned by a special *deputation of the Society* investigating the matter thoroughly, and by approaching the proper authorities. Surely, all the Shikar Companies of the country cannot be condemned for the faults of *one* particular firm.

5. Excessive profit making by Shikar Companies.

Shikar Companies are carrying on their business for *making money*, and *not just for the sake of fun*. But it is a very common misconception, and we cannot really blame your Editor for supposing that huge profits are made by Shikar Companies. But the only thing we can do is to extend an open invitation to your Editor to come and see our accounts for the past so many years that we have been in this business, and also ask him to try and run at least one Shikar Camp on the lines followed by us. He will then be in a better position to write Editorials concerning profits made by Shikar Companies. It is true that American tourists pay handsomely for their Shikars, but the service they expect and insist on, has also to be considered. We would like to assure you, and this can be seen by attending any of our Shikar Camps, that American tourists do not pay fabulous sums just to have a glimpse at the hind quarters of a fleeting tiger, as your Editor seems to imagine.

In conclusion we request that in the name of justice and fair play, for which your Society stands, this letter of ours should be published in the next issue of your Journal

“CHEETAL”. If we have made any false statements, this may kindly be pointed out to us, and we shall be only too glad to stand corrected, and will apologize.

We offer our full co-operation and are always ready to place our services and resources at the service of your Society for better game preservation in the country.

Yours faithfully

For Indian Shikar & Tours (P) Ltd.,
Dalip Singh, Manager.

[In justice to the writer of the above letter we are publishing it. In justice to ourselves we are adding this Editorial note.]

The writer alludes to baseless and ill-informed articles. We should like to point out that for the charge of illegal shooting by a Shikar Company we gave ‘chapter and verse’, and the facts may be seen in the words of the American sportsman, Denton Scott in his book ‘Forests of the Night’. Other examples not so authenticated, though obviously genuine enough, may be got from another shikar book by a keen conservationist, Mr. Hugh Allen—in ‘The Lonely Tiger’ and we have been informed of other cases as well from equally reliable sources.

Our suggestion in the April 1961 Editorial was that it was difficult to believe that such illegal shooting could be got away with without resort to corruption of lower Forest servants. We made no mention of bribery in our October editorial. It is unfortunately only too well known that such corruption is prevalent not only by Shikar Companies, but by individuals. What is the use of shutting our eyes to it? We are quite unrepentant in restating that we do not believe that the clients of Shikar Companies should be allotted blocks in preference over individuals who are either Indians or long resident in India. Are we such beggars for dollars that the individual’s rights must be overridden? England is sorely in need of dollars, but, when an American visits the British Isles, to sample her trout and salmon fishing or her grouse and pheasant shooting, or her deer-stalking, is he given preferential treatment? No. He competes on the same terms exactly as any British citizen. When an Indian goes to America with the idea of shooting a moose, a wapiti or grizzly bear, does he get preferential allotment of blocks over other American or Canadian citizens? We do not believe so.

The remission of customs duties for foreign sportsmen is not done at the expense of other Indian citizens. The allotment of blocks is. In saying this we do not wish to be unfriendly to our American visitors. Mr. Daleep Singh mentions the appeal made on posters ‘to treat the foreign visitor as our guest’. Surely we can do this without infringing the rights of our citizens—rights which must be upheld for an entirely different reason—the cause of Wild Life.

Wild Life will not be saved in India by drawing-room sentimentalities, or by putting a stop to all kinds of shikar. It will be saved by encouraging the legitimate shikari to help in preservation, in his own interests as well as in the interests of the animals and birds—as has been done with success in America and Africa. He is the man who will save India's Wild Life. Some of these sportsmen are men of unquestionable ethics in regard to shikar. Others are capable of conversion. We need to develop a new spirit in regard to the methods of shikar, not to discourage it. Such a man feels very frustrated when, on applying for a block, he learns that months before, it was allotted to a Shikar Company.

We realise that the Shikar Companies are obviously interested in wild life preservation, and we eagerly welcome their support, of which Mr. Dalip Singh assures us. We are out to stop illegitimate and illegal shooting and to encourage sporting and legal methods. We can work together, but don't ask us to say that black is white, and white black.

Finally may we draw Mr. Dalip Singh's attention to a 'Review' in the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society—Vol. 58, No. 2, which will explain our point of view better than any further words here. The writer of the review is Hugh Allen, the author of 'The Lonely Tiger'. We know of at least two wildly keen Wild Life enthusiasts who are running Shikar Companies, so that our attitude towards them will never be hostile.

—Editor.

Some State Measures for Preservation of Wild Life.

Grant of facilities for Accommodation in the Rest Houses of the State to Honorary Game Wardens

GOVERNMENT OF GUJARAT AGRICULTURE AND LANDS DEPARTMENT

Sachivalaya, Ahmedabad.

Resolution No. WLP-1261/79070-A.

Dated the 16th January, 1962.

Resolution. With a view to facilitate visits of the Honorary Game Wardens to the various Forest areas or shooting blocks in the State, Government is pleased to direct that Honorary Game Wardens should be treated as officers of the State Government under rules 6 A and 7 of the Rules for Inspection Bungalows and given all possible facilities as per rules in the Rest Houses of the State (i.e. Forest Rest Houses, Public Works Department Rest Houses etc.) whenever they are on such visits to the Forests in this State.

By order and in the name of the Governor of Gujarat,
Signed Under Secretary to the Government of Gujarat
Agriculture and Lands Department.

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GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM FOREST DEPARTMENT: WILD LIFE BRANCH

No. FOR/WL/251/60/33.

Dated SHILLONG, the 12th February 1962.

From : Under Secretary to the Government of Assam, Forest Department.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF HONORARY FOREST OFFICERS OF THE STATE.

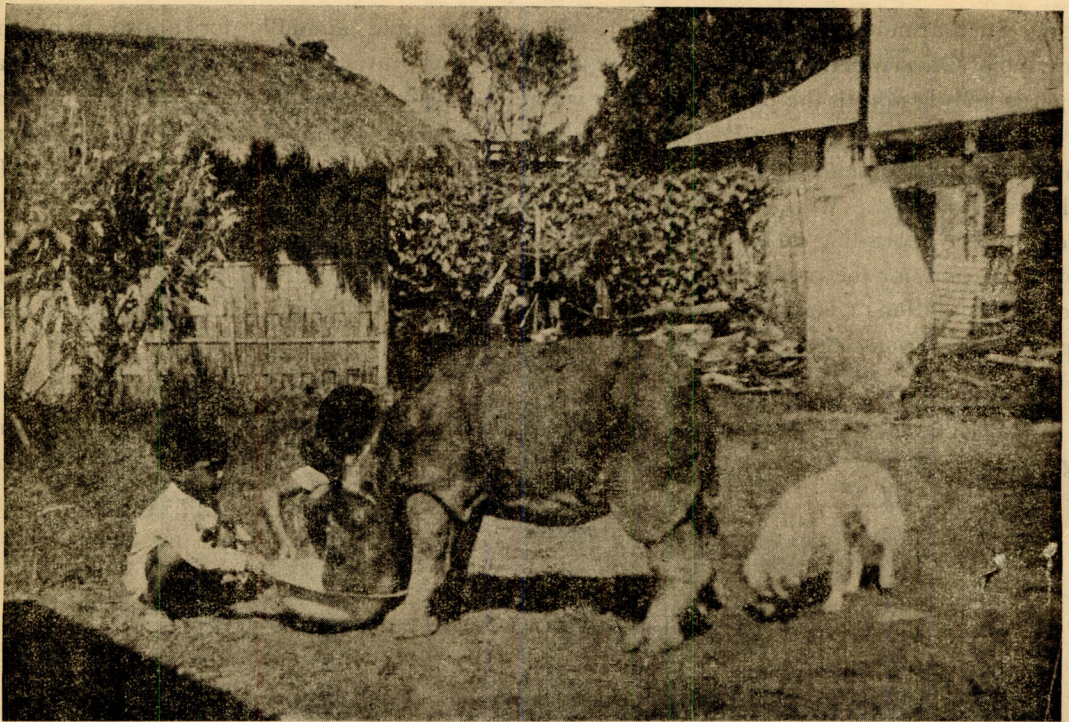
APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY FOREST OFFICERS.

Selected Indian and European gentlemen, living in the vicinity of a Game Sanctuary or Forest Reserves, may be appointed Honorary Forest Officers under section 3 (1) of the Assam Forest Regulation by the Conservator of Forests, Assam, provided that they are in a position to render assistance in the protection of forests and the preservation of wild life, and provided that the Deputy Commissioners and the Political Officers concerned have no objec-

tion. Such appointments, a list of which will be submitted annually for approval of the Provincial Government, will be renewable each year, and in each case will be limited as regards jurisdiction to the particular areas where the assistance of Honorary Forest Officers are required. All Honorary Forest Officers will be assistants to the Divisional Forest Officers in the areas for which they are appointed, but without jurisdiction over the Divisional staff. They will exercise powers, in whole or in part, as shall be determined in each case by the Conservator depending on whether the appointment is for the general protection of the forests or only for the preservation of wild life, under section 49, 49A, 60 and 61 of the Assam Forest Regulation. They will become liable under section 58(1), and will be bound to take appropriate action under section 74.

We publish the above as an example of what should be done everywhere. The U. P. apparently, are against Honorary Game Wardens.
—Editor.

OBITUARY.



Motherless baby rhino enjoying a meal.

The death occurred recently, as the result of an operation in a Calcutta hospital, of R.C. Das of the Assam Forest Department. Das was a comparatively young man at the time of his death and had risen from the ranks by dint of hard work and efficiency within a comparatively short period. He was intensely interested in wild life and had recently joined the Wild Life Preservation Society of India. For several years in charge of the Kaziranga Sanctuary of Assam, where he developed his interest in wild life and where he had come to be known to a large number of people visiting the sanctuary, he was placed in charge of the Assam Zoo when that project was inaugurated a few years ago. Since then he laboured hard to build up the zoo from scratch, and the rapid progress that has been made is entirely due to his energy and initiative.

Romesh Das will be sadly missed by a large circle of friends and fellow workers, who appreciated his keenness, integrity and hard work as much as they did his good nature and kindly disposition, but most of all he will be missed by the wild life of Assam. At the time of his death he had been expecting to become the first Wild Life Preservation Officer of the State and it will be difficult to find a suitable man in his place. Das has left behind a large family and his admirers are contemplating the launching of an appeal for their assistance. The picture is that of two of his children feeding a baby rhinoceros which Das had rescued from tigers in Kaziranga.

P.D.S.

FORM IV

(See Rule 8)

- | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|--|
| 1. Place of publication | ... | ... | Dehra Dun, U.P. |
| 2. Periodicity of its publication | ... | ... | Bi-Annually—April & October. |
| 3. Printer's Name | ... | ... | Shri Tara Chand Sharma. |
| Nationality | ... | ... | Indian. |
| Address | ... | ... | Dun Printing House,
27, Rajpur Road, Dehra Dun,
U.P. |
| 4. Publisher's Name | ... | ... | Mr. R. L. Holdsworth. |
| Nationality | ... | ... | English. |
| Address | ... | ... | Doon School, Dehra Dun, U.P. |
| 5. Editor's Name | ... | ... | Mr. R. L. Holdsworth. |
| Nationality | ... | ... | English. |
| Address | ... | ... | Doon School, Dehra Dun, U.P. |
| 6. Name and address of individuals
who own the newspaper and
partners or shareholders holding
more than one percent of the
total capital. | ... | ... | Wild Life Preservation Society
of Northern India. |

I, R. L. Holdsworth, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

R. L. Holdsworth.

Publisher.

Dated 30th Oct., 1958.

FORM IV

(See Rule 6)

1. Name of publication

2. Frequency of publication

3. Issue of year

4. Author

5. Address

6. Name of printer

7. Title of work

8. Age

9. Date of issue

10. Name of

11. Name of

12. Name and address of individual

13. Name of newspaper and

14. Name of individual holding

15. Name of individual of the

16. Name of

17. Name of knowledge and belief

18. R. T. Holdsworth

19. Address

20. Date 30th Oct. 1938

Cost of Society's Crested Article, the Journal "Cheetal" and cost of Advertisements.

JOURNAL "CHEETAL"

Annual (two issues)

I	Delivery by Ordinary Book Post	...	...	...	Rs. 5.00
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III	„ by V.P.P.	...	...	...	„ 6.50

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	2 Writing Pads with 100 covers (inclusive of postage)	...	„ 8.00
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5	„ „ 250 covers „ „ „	...	„ 22.00
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**JOIN THE SOCIETY AND HELP PRESERVE INDIA'S
VANISHING WILD LIFE**

THE CHEETAL

JOURNAL OF THE WILD LIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF INDIA

Volume 4

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. Ourselves	1
2. Editorial Notes	5
3. Book Review—A Hundred Years Ago—Sterndale	7
4. Miscellaneous Notes	11
5. The Rogues of Assam—W. Lowrie Campbell	19
6. The Devil—R. Kapadia	25
7. The Present Status of Four Rare Animals of India—E. P. Gee	29
8. Game Preservation in the U.P.—Arjan Singh	33
9. India's National Parks and Sanctuaries—Taroba National Park	35
10. It Happened in India	39
11. And How They Do It Elsewhere	41
12. Bird Watcher's Corner	44
13. Children's Corner :-	
A Wee Sparrow called Padday—Mrs. Yvonne Imam	46
I Lived Amongst Tigers—J. E. Carrington Turner	50
14. An Open Letter to Dr. Gardiner Bump	56
15. Letters to the Editor	58
16. Some State Measures for Preservation of Wild Life	68
17. Obituary	70